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TRACTS

ON

MORAL AND RELIGIOUS SUBJECTS:

PUBLISHED BY

An Association

Of MEMBERS of the

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS.

VOL. I.

London:

Printed by William and Samuel Graves, Sherborne-Lane.

1823.

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Introduction.

The Association on behalf of which, by its Committee meeting in London, the following pieces have been at different times published, or republished, originated in the summer of 1813. Its object has been to furnish to members of the Society of Friends a selection of small pieces, of a moral and religious nature, which they might with consistency circulate, for the information and edification of their fellow-professors of the Christian name. The encouragement given to the design has fully equalled the expectations of its first promoters; upwards of One hundred thousand of the Tracts in question having issued from the depository, in the course of the last two years.

It will be obvious on a perusal of this volume, that the chief aim of the Committee has been, to edit pieces which should inculcate and recommend the great truths of practical Christianity: having regard at the same time to that view of it which they deem most sound and Scriptural. Hence, although the advantage of a variety of matter has not been lost sight of, the collection will be found, throughout, to point chiefly to a due attention to the teachings of the Spirit of Christ in the heart, as the means of true and inward sanctification.

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Together with the leading doctrines of Holy Scripture, (the diffusion of which, as a whole, now forms so happily a ground of union and co-operation among Christians,) the Editors have held up to notice some principles which are more particularly advocated by the Society of Friends. They have done this from a conviction that these, also, rest on the same evidence of Scripture, and tend to promote the present and future well-being of those who conscientiously endeavour to live up to them. With these sentiments, and desiring for every disciple of Christ, under whatever name, an advancement in the knowledge and obedience of the Truth, they commit their endeavours to Him by whose blessing alone the labours of his servants can prosper.

London, Fifth Month, 1816.

[*The above was prefixed to the first volume of the present Collection: a second is now formed from the tracts that have been since published.*]

A

TENDER VISITATION

IN THE

LOVE OF GOD;

CONTAINING

A plain Testimony to the Ancient and Apostolical Life, Way, and Worship.

By WILLIAM PENN.

A NEW EDITION.

London:

Printed by William and Samuel Graves, Sherborne-Lane;
for the Tract Association of the
SOCIETY OF FRIENDS.

1820.

No. 1. 6th Edit.

Advertisement.

The ensuing Tract, which was written by William Penn in the Year 1677, is now re-printed (with one or two small omissions) from the Appendix to his Life in the first Edition of his Works. The Title at length as there given, is, *A tender Visitation, in the love of God that overcometh the World, to all People in the High and Low Dutch Nations, who hunger and thirst after Righteousness, and desire to know and worship God in Truth and Sincerity, containing a plain Testimony to the Ancient and Apostolical Life, Way, and Worship, that God is reviving and exalting in the Earth, in his Spirit and Truth.* The universal importance of the subject, and the impressive manner in which it is treated, have led to a persuasion that the republication of this Epistle or Address will be acceptable; and a hope is entertained, that the circulation of it may be of service in promoting the cause of vital Religion.

A

TENDER VISITATION,

&c.

FRIENDS,

IN that love wherewith God, the Father of all mercy, and our Lord Jesus Christ hath loved and visited my soul, I likewise love and visit you; wishing in the same love that you, with all the saints might come to experience, what is the knowledge, faith, hope, worship, and service, that is of and from God, and which alone is truly acceptable unto him*. And that you might so run, that you may obtain; and that you being armed with the spiritual weapons, may so fight, as you may gain the prize, and inherit the crown: so that the great God, the Lord of heaven and Earth, he who shall judge the quick and the dead, he may be known by you, to be your God, and you may know yourselves to be his children; born not of *blood*, nor of the *will of the flesh*, nor of the *will of man*, but born again of his *holy* and *incorruptible seed*; by the word of God, born of his *Spirit*†, and joined unto him in an everlasting covenant: that while you live here, you may not live to yourselves, but to the *glory of God:* and when you have finished your course here below, you may lay down your heads in peace, and enter into everlasting rest with the faithful; here all tears shall be wiped away from your eyes, and

* John iv. 23, 24. † John i. 13, & iii. 6, and 1 Pet. i. 23.

everlasting joy and gladness shall be the portion of your inheritance*.

Let me therefore, Friends, speak freely, and be open-hearted unto you, and consider you my words in the fear of God, for I am pressed in spirit to write to you.

First, have you all turned yourselves to God, who was the Teacher of *Adam*, (while in his innocency,) who was the Teacher of the *Israelites*, through his prophets, and of the *true Christians* through his son Jesus†; through whom he speaks his will in the hearts of all true Christians: if not, then are you yet erring from his Spirit, and going astray from the Lord, who is the Teacher of the new covenant.

Secondly, know you the *end* and *design* of the coming of Christ? are you come to an inward experience of what the same is? Hearken to the words of his beloved disciple, who has said, *For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might* (put an end to sin, and) *destroy the works of the Devil*‡. Do you know this by your own experience? Ah! deceive not yourselves; where, pray, does sin dwell? and where are the works of the devil? are they not in the hearts of men and women? is not that the seat of *wickedness*, the tabernacle of *sin*, the temple of the *Devil*? have not men there worshipped his spirit§? have not men there bowed down before him? and are not all such born of his evil seed? Must not Christ, who is the *Seed* of God, bruise his *head*, there destroy his work, and take his kingdom from him? The soul, which by Satan is defiled, and kept in

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* Rev. xxi. 4. † Heb. i, 2. ‡ 1 John iii. 8. § Rev. xiii.

captivity, must not Christ redeem it, purify it, and save it? that it may be changed, and seasoned with the divine seed, and so come to bear the holy image of the same: to that end, that Christ may come to dwell in a *pure heart*, and that God may be worshipped in his own *evangelical* temple, in his own Spirit in man and woman? What of these things are you truly come to know? and what have you yet felt hereof; Christ is therefore come into the world, even for that very end is he called JESUS, viz. that he should *save his people from their sins**: and to that end has *John* directed all to him, by these words, *Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world*†.

Look now to yourselves, O inhabitants of *Christendom!* whether he has taken away your sins, and what those sins are. Examine and try yourselves by his holy light, from what evil things you are now redeemed, which you were before subject unto; for Christ saves no man from the wrath of God, whom he hath not first redeemed from sin: for, *the wages of sin is death*‡, and *whatsoever men sow, that they shall reap, in the great and last day of judgment.*

To whom then do you live, my friends, and in what life? Do you live in the life of God and Christ, wherein the saints of old did live, whose *lives were hid with Christ in God*§; and who did live, because *Christ lived in them?* Is the old wine, and also the old bottles put away? Is the old man with all his deeds put off? The old evil and corrupt ground, which brings forth all evil and corrupt

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* Mat. i. 21. † John i. 29. ‡ Rom. vi. 23.
§ Col. iii. 3.

fruits; is that burnt up by the fire of God? for *his word is like a fire**. The old heavens, the old service of God, are they *rolled up as a scroll, and vesture,* and *melted through the strong heat of the burning and judging spirit of God?* Are you become as *new bottles*, which receive the *new wine* of the kingdom of God, which endures for ever? Have you, my friends, *put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness, and* in *true holiness*†. Can you feel that there is brought forth in you the *new heaven*, and the *new earth*, wherein righteousness dwelleth? Consider, you who truly and sincerely seek to know the Lord, and his works in you, and *spend not your money for that which is not bread*, nor *your labour for that which satisfieth not*‡, nor will profit any thing in the day of account: that your souls be not deceived, but that you may be saved in the day of the Lord.

Come, you that are *weary* and *heavy-laden*, and you that *hunger* and *thirst* after *righteousness*, and desire to walk in the purity and righteousness of the saints: be it known unto you that Jesus Christ, who can discharge, ease, help, and save you all, he is near you, and stands at the door of your hearts, and that he waits to be *gracious* to you; he knocks, that you may open unto him§. It is he who has visited you with his saving light, whereby he has manifested your state and condition to you, and begotten a holy feeling in you, whereby you are become weary of your evil doings, and raises up a holy thirst in you after better things. Now then, if you desire, and

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* Jer. xxiii. 29. † Eph. iv. 24. ‡ Isa. lv. 2.
§ Rev. iii. 20. and Isa. xxx. 18.

expect ever to be filled, and satisfied from him, then must you receive him as he is revealed, and as his holy will is made known in your hearts; and keep yourselves under his holy judgments and reproofs: for *the reproofs of instruction are the way of* eternal *life**. Love therefore, that which reproves you for evil, and turn from those evils for which you are reproved; for *Zion shall be redeemed through judgment, and her converts with rightcousness*†. Love, I say, the judgments of Christ, and submit thereunto, and wait for him, to feel him yet more and more, that you thus may say, with one of old, *In the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee:* and, *with our souls have we desired thee in the night season; and with our spirits within us will we seek thee early: for when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness*‡. *For judgment*, said Christ, *am I come into this world*§: that is, as a holy light, to make manifest; and as a righteous judge, to condemn all unrighteousness of men: and all those that love his reproofs, and willingly suffer his chastisings, and fatherly rebukes, they shall see *judgment brought forth unto victory*‖, and that the *Prince of this world*, the corrupt root, the corrupt nature, ground, or origin, in you, as well as the evil fruits, and ungodly works thereof, shall be *judged*. And when this is done, and is fulfilled, then you shall know what it is to sing his high praises in truth and righteousness; then you shall come to sing the song of the Lamb; and know, that you, by that Lamb are redeemed and saved¶.

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* Prov. vi. 23. † Isa. i. 27. & iv. 4. ‡ Isa. xxvi. 8, 9.
§ John ix. 39. ‖ Mat. xii. 20. ¶ Rev. v. 9.

But it may be some will ask, Who is able to perform so great and blessed a work? Fear not, you that seek the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, with all your hearts: for God has laid *help* upon one that is *mighty*, *viz.* upon Jesus Christ, and he shall make your sins known unto you, and redeem you from all unrighteousness, if you will walk in his light, as his beloved disciple speaks, saying, *If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin**. And therefore, friends, if you will be saved by the blood of Christ, then must you leave and forsake all which the light of Christ does condemn in you; yea, you must watch against your own thoughts, words, and deeds, that you at unawares may not be overcome by the enemy of your souls: for he comes as a *thief* in the night to destroy you. Do not live, nor act so as to *grieve the Holy Spirit of God*†; but turn your minds from all evil, in *thoughts*, *words*, and *deeds*; yea, if you love the *light of Christ*, then *bring your deeds* every day to the *light*, *and see whether they are wrought in God*, *or no: for all things that are reproved* or justified, *are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light*‡: and that light *burns as an oven against all unrighteousness*; yea, *it is like a refiner's fire*§. For it is the fiery part of the baptism of Christ, and therefore it is called the *brightness of his coming*, *the consuming spirit of his mouth*‖, whereby that wicked one shall be revealed, and burnt up, and rooted out; the thorns and briers shall be burned up and

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* 1 John i. 7. † Eph. iv. 30. ‡ Eph. v. 13. § Mal. iii. iv. ‖ 2 Thes. ii. 8, and Isa. x. 17.

devoured, and the filthiness both of flesh and spirit purged away. If now your sins are become a burthen to you ; if you thereby are wearied, and if you heartily desire that they may be weakened in you, and at last conquered also ; then let the *holy watch of Jesus* be sincerely and earnestly kept in your hearts ; which *watch* is in the *light ;* for in darkness is no safe nor true watching. Watch therefore with the light of Christ, wherewith you are enlightened ; watch (I say) against every unfruitful *thought*, *word*, and *work* of darkness. Stand upon your guard in the blessed light, and be you armed therewith, like the saints of old, that you may discern the enemy, and resist him, when and howsoever he does appear and approach unto you ; that so he may not overcome you, but that you may obtain victory over him ; for when he sees his allurements ineffectual, his snares discovered and broken, (as this is done in the light of Christ,) then is he weakened in his attempts, and your souls grow stronger to resist him, until at last he be wholly defeated and conquered. For this was the way of the ancients, who were more than conquerors*, who walking after the light and Spirit of Jesus, were redeemed from condemnation, which will come upon all those that live after the flesh. O this *light* and this *grace* bringeth *salvation*! for it teacheth *us to deny ungodliness, and worldly lusts*, which bring condemnation, *and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world*†. And this is the only living way to the everlasting rest and peace of God. This was the teacher of the saints, this was *Paul's* refuge and comfort in his greatest temptations. *My grace*

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* Rom. viii. 14, 37. † Titus ii. 11, 12.

(said the Lord) *is sufficient for thee**. And as it has been in time past, so is it in this our day, to all them that come to receive it, embrace it, and love it, and who are willing to be guided by it, and follow it; and to them said the Lord, *Depart you from all evil ways, from all vain uses and customs, and from the vanities of this world*†. Receive you my counsel, which is the living oracle, or the voice of God, and the fountain of all wisdom; and do not hew out to yourselves *cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water*‡.

Thirdly, are your preachers and teachers sent by God, or by men§? How are they come to be your teachers? consider of this seriously. Are they of those that have accompanied with Jesus? are they instructed and sanctified by him? are they born again? have they received their commissions and are they sent forth by him‖? are they true and faithful witnesses? have they *heard, seen, tasted,* and *handled* that which they speak and deliver unto you¶? Is it the living Word which they preach unto you? or do they by their own spirit, and understanding, in their own time and will, explain and interpret those matters, which the saints of old, and the primitive Christians spake forth as they were moved by the Holy Ghost**? if it be so, then have they not received such work, or such victory, through the Holy Spirit in themselves, as the saints had experience of.

Fourthly, do your preachers turn your minds to the light of Christ††, (that is, the life in him,) which *shines in your hearts;* which alone disco-

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* 2 Cor. xii. 9. † See Isa. lii. 11. ‡ Prov. viii. 1, &c. Jer. ii. 13.
§ Gal. i. 1. ‖ Mat. xxviii. 19, & Acts i. 4, 5, 8. ¶ 1 John i. 1.
** 2 Pet. i. 21. †† Acts xxvi. 18.

vers *sin to the creature*, and shows every man what the Lord *doth require of him**. Do they direct you to that light which did lead the saints of old, and by their *believing in the light*, made them *children of light*†? wherein the *nations of them that are saved shall walk*‡? Do they turn you, (I say,) to this *light*, to this *grace* and *spirit* in yourselves, which cometh by *Jesus Christ?* Does your knowledge, feeling, experience, and worship, consist in the revelations and works of this blessed principle of God's begetting in you? so that your faith and hope consist not in words only, (though they may all be true in words,) nor in the education of an outward religious persuasion by vain teachers; but that your *faith* and *hope* are grounded, and builded upon the *power of the living God*, who gives victory over the world §, unto all those, who in their hearts, *believe in the light of Jesus;* and this blessed hope, *purifies* the heart, and *fortifies* the soul.

Fifthly, when you come to your meetings, both preachers and people, what do you do? Do you then gather together bodily only, and kindle a *fire*, compassing yourselves about with the *sparks* of your own kindling, and so please yourselves, and walk in the *light of your own fire, and in the sparks which you have kindled* ‖; as those did in the time of old, whose portion it was to *lie down in sorrow?* or rather, do you sit down in *true silence*, resting from your own *will* and *workings*, and *waiting upon the Lord* ¶, fixed with your minds in that *light* wherewith Christ has *enlightened* you**, until the Lord *breathes* life in you, refresheth you, and prepares you, and your spirits, and souls, to make

* Micah vi. 8. † John xii. 36 ‡ Rev. xxi. 23-24. § 1 John 5, 4.
‖ Isa. l. 11. ¶ Lam. iii. 25, 26, 28. ** John i. 9.

you fit for his service, that you may offer unto him a pure and spiritual sacrifice? For *that which is born of the flesh, is flesh*;* and *he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption: for flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God: but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall, of the Spirit, reap life eternal†*, through Christ who has quickened him.

What have you felt then, my friends, of this work in your hearts? has Christ there appeared? what has he done for you? have you bowed down before him, and received him in your hearts? Is he *formed* in you‡? Do you live *no more*, but does Christ live *in* you? for if you know not Christ to be *in* you, then are you yet *reprobates*§, though you confess him in words; as the apostle said of old.

All you therefore, that hunger and thirst after the righteousness of God's kingdom, which is an everlasting blessed kingdom, *turn in*, my friends, and come *to Christ*, who stands at the *door* of your hearts and *knocks*‖. He is the *light of the world*, and it concerns all true servants of the Lord, to direct all men to this light; else have they not a right discerning, nor true sight or taste of the things of God, *viz. to turn men from darkness to light, from the* kingdom *of Satan, to the power*, and kingdom *of God;* from the dark inventions, and human traditions of men, to Christ the great *Light of God, the High Priest*, and *Holy Prophet*, whom all men must hear, and out of whose mouth, the law of the *spirit of life* must be received¶. By this he judges men in Righ-

* John iii. 6. † Gal. vi. 8. 1 Cor. xv. 50. ‡ Gal. iv. 19.
§ 2 Cor. xiii. 5. ‖ Rev. iii. 20. ¶ Rom. viii. 2.

teousness, and in him are hid all the *treasures of wisdom and knowledge**. This is the High Priest of all true Christians, and their *chief treasure*.

Happy therefore are all those that receive him in their hearts, those that know him to be their *Light*, their *Guide*, their *King*, their *Law-giver*, their *Bishop*, and their *heavenly Shepherd*, who follow him through all things, and through all persecutions, and sufferings, and that stedfastly love his cross, (the power of God,) and with all gladness embrace the reproach thereof; who have experienced, that *without* Christ† they can do *nothing*; and therefore wait for his divine power, strength, and wisdom, to govern and guide them. For such can receive no testimony from any preachers, except that testimony which is given from the *holy unction*‡, in and through them; because men, without Christ, can do nothing, as he has said: for men cannot preach, men cannot pray, men cannot sing as it ought to be; yea, men, without him, can do nothing to the praise and glory of God. For it is only the Son of God that glorifies the Father through his children.

And therefore let him kindle the fire with the pure coals from his holy altar; and do you not offer to him in your self-will: no, Jesus did not do his *own will*, but the *will of his Father*§. So let us not do our *own*, but *his will*. He has done nothing but what his Father had made known unto him; and we must all witness what Christ has declared unto us, and what he has wrought in us‖, or else we should be false witnesses. *Woman*, said Christ to his mother, *mine hour is*

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* Col. ii. 3. † John xv. 5. ‡ 1 John ii, 20.
§ John vi. 38. ‖ John iii. 11. 1 John i. 3.

not yet come. So that he did wait his Father's time, in whose hands the times and seasons are. We must *wait*, but God *orders*, and happy are those who do his will. *My sheep*, said Christ, *hear my voice and follow me**? *but they will not hear the voice of strangers.* Now those that speak, if their voices and conversations are not with the life, the power, and with the spirit of Christ, they are strange voices, (I pray you observe well,) and Christ's sheep will not sit under *such voices*, nor under *such shepherds;* who do but steal† the words of the prophets and apostles, but do not experience them, nor succeed them in their spirits and conversations. For Christ's sheep do discern those that *so teach*, from *his*, for he has given that spiritual gift to *see* them; which is not to be had, nor found in the crafty wisdom of the world, with all its human learnings, arts, and sciences, but stands in the innocent nature of the *true sheep*; and for them it is like *natural*, viz. souls that are become harmless, and are arrived at the state of a *little child*; for to such doth God reveal his secrets: because, by the work of regeneration, they are become his own begotten, and to such belongs the kingdom of God, and the knowledge of the mysteries thereof.

Wherefore, pray take notice, how it is with you. Is sin revealed? Yes. Through what? By the *light of Christ.* But is sin likewise judged? Have you submitted yourselves to *his light?* and are you therewith united? Is your old self-righteousness thereby judged? and are thereby all your false judgments judged? Is the prince of this world judged in you? Does Christ *go before you*‡? And does he give you eternal life? Ex-

* John x. 27. † Jer. xxiii. 30. ‡ John x. 4.

amine and search yourselves, for thus he deals with his sheep: *I go before them, they follow me, and, behold, I give them life eternal.* Does Christ go before you, and lead you in all your worship, which you do as your bounden duty to God? Do you wait for his leadings? Is it the religion of Christ wherein you walk? Read his holy sermon on the mount. Or else, do you *go before* him, and do you *climb up another way**, before he stirs in you, before he moves you, before he gives you power and ability to approach his throne? Ah! True silence before the Lord, is better abundantly than *forward prayers*, and *self-willed offers*, or any traditional and formal performances: for consider, that it is *life eternal to know God*†. Now, no man can know him, who has not heard his voice. And no man can hear his voice, who is not silent in himself, and waits not *patiently* for him, that he may *hear what God will speak to his soul*‡, through Christ Jesus, the great, holy, and heavenly *high Priest* of God, to mankind, who is the heavenly prophet also, unto all them that believe in his name. But, my friends, do you know the *fellowship* of his *holy life*, of his blessed *cross*, *death*, and *resurrection*§? Do you confess him inwardly in yourselves, as well as outwardly before men? If so, then has he given you life eternal. Again, if you feel not in you, *life* and *immortality*‖ brought to *light*, then are you yet in your sins, and know not the *Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world*¶. For *as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the children of God***. And they know by the witness of God in themselves, that they are *of*

* John x. 1, 8. † Ib. xvii. 3. ‡ Ps. lxxxv. 8. § Phil. iii. 10, 11.
‖ 2 Tim. i. 10. ¶ John i. 29. ** Jn. i. 12.

God, as said the beloved disciple *John, and the whole world lieth in wickedness**.

Beloved friends, beware therefore of *idolatry*, and *worshipping of images*, I mean the worship of *inward images*, which is an *inward idolatry*; for if you show a great aversion against all outward idolatry, yet if you worship God after the imaginations you have of God, and which you conceive in your own minds, without the inspiration of the Almighty, you worship images of your own framing, and so come to commit idolatry. And therefore take heed that your worship does not consist in your own imaginations, and self-conceits of God; and do not bow down to such, (which is indeed to yourselves,) and then think or presume that you are bowing down to God and Christ; when, on the contrary, it is nothing else but a mere picture of your own making. And this is the great abomination and loss of poor Christendom, viz. That the spirit which deceives man, sits in the place of God, and is worshipped as God†, by those that know not the true and living God; who is as a consuming fire, and as everlasting burnings in the soul against sin, righteousness, and judgment of the world‡.

Now he that revealeth the Father, is the Son, the true light: for he has said, *No man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him*§. Has Christ revealed the Father unto you? Are you come to Jesus? If so, then you have known the godly sorrow, the true mourning, and that repentance which men need never to repent of. But if you have not known

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* 1 John v. 19. † Dan. xii. 11, and 2 Thes. ii. 4.
‡ John xvi. 8. § Matt. xi. 27.

this day of judgment and contrition, then are you not come to Christ. Wherefore come you to Jesus, viz. to his appearance in you, by his divine Light and Spirit, which every way discovers, and judges the world's nature, spirit, and image in you: for to him is all Judgment committed, and he will reveal the Father; yea, he that has seen the Son, has likewise seen the Father; for he is in the Father, and the Father is in him*. If now the manifestation of Jesus in you, as well of the Father, as of the Son, is the *foundation* of your knowledge, so that God and Christ, *whom to know is life eternal*, are become the holy object of your worship; then are you real worshippers in his Spirit and truth†; then are you come out from the workmanship, from the will and imaginations of your own spirits, and from all human worship, and are come to the worship of the Spirit of the living God, and to live in him, be led and moved by him in all godly performances, for the *spirit of man* only knows the *things of man*, but the *Spirit of God knows* and reveals the *things of God*‡. (And this worship§ of his kingdom and church, has Christ raised up again in these our days, which was set up by Christ sixteen hundred years ago.) And in this worship have the true followers worshipped the Father, before the great apostasy, from the spirit and power of the Lord, broke in upon the primitive ages of the church. And after such a glorious manner shall it be restored; yea, so it is already with many thousands, whom God, through the appearance of Christ in the heart, has gathered, both in our, and other countries, whereby he has judged them

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* John xiv. 10, 11.
† Ibid. iv. 24.
‡ 1 Cor. ii. 11.
§ John iv. 23.

as men in the flesh (in their *fleshly lusts*, in their *fleshly worships*) that they might live unto God and Christ; who quickened them by the death of the Cross, and justified them as men in the spirit risen from the dead.

Glory be therefore to God, who lives and reigns on high, that *that dark and sorrowful night* is vanishing, and that the sun-rising of the eternal day has already appeared, and is arising more and more over the nations in the world; in which day, *Babylon, the mother of harlots* [*false worshippers*] shall come in *remembrance**, before the God of the whole earth, viz. that *Babylon*, which has followed *merchandizing* with the *scripture*, and with the *souls of men*†, and has *persecuted* the spiritual seed, the children of God, and faithful witnesses of Jesus, (although clothed in *sackcloth*‡,) because they would not receive *her marks*§, and *her fine linen too*, nor submit to her *fleshly birth, invention, profession, worship, and dominion.*

This *Babylon* lives but too much yet in every one, of all sorts of people, or professors, by whom the truth is held in *unrighteousness*: when they see not through the light of the Spirit of Christ, and when their knowledge and worship of God is not received and performed, by that same blessed Spirit. There, I say, is *Babylon*, that is, *confusion: Oh, come out of her my people!* saith the Lord, *and I will receive you.*

He that calls God his Father, and is not *born of God;* he that calls Christ Lord, and not *by the*

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* Rev. xvi. 19.
† Ibid. xviii. 13.
‡ Ibid. xi. 3.
§ Ibid. xiii. 16.

Holy Spirit, but mean-while is serving another master; those, that attribute to themselves the words of the *regenerated*, their revelations and experiences, when they are yet *unregenerated*, and have no part therein, but endeavour in all these things to make themselves a fair covering; they shall experience in the day of the Lord, that it shall profit them nothing: for, *Wo to those*, said the Lord, *that cover with a covering, and not of my Spirit; that take counsel, but not of me**. Let, therefore, all those that are yet in *Babylon*, hasten out of her speedily, and you that are in the *suburbs* of that great city, hasten you away; yea, make haste, with all speed! Prepare yourselves to meet the Lamb, your bridegroom; who comes now to you (who are *mourning*, *hungering*, and *thirsting* after him) to lead you out of your bewildered states, to his saving light, and blessed appearance: for now he sees you, and now he calls you, and knocks at your doors to come in unto you. And therefore open ye unto him, and let him in; let him no longer lie in the manger†, nor at your doors; but rather give him your hearts, and let him *reign* over you as a *King*, for he has bought us with his own *precious blood*, and is therefore worthy that we serve and honour him, and that he reign over us; and that he be our *King* and *Law-giver*, who *gave his own life for us, that we should not perish, but have everlasting life‡ in him*. He has laid down his life for you, and can you not lay down your sins for his sake; yea, for your own sakes? Consider that he descended from the glory of his Father, to bring you to glory; and can you not depart from the *withering* glory of this world, that you may inherit his glory,

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* Isa. xxx. 1. † Luke ii. 7. ‡ John iii. 16.

which is everlasting? It is that wrong false self in man which only hinders it, it is *that* only which objects against it, that consults, and endeavours to avoid the Cross.

This *self* has in all times been desirous to be in great esteem, and has therefore, in all ages, hindered men from doing the will of God *on earth, as it is in heaven;* but where *self* is disannulled, and men have had no great esteem for the selfish part, but have humbled themselves to the death of the Cross of Christ, that he might deliver them from the *wrath to come*, and give them *an inheritance in the kingdom of his Father*, there the will of God will be done on earth, as it is in heaven, and therein will the heavenly Father be glorified. On the contrary, those that live in sin, they are in communion with the devil, and drink his cup of unrighteousness: which, however it is sweet in the mouth, is afterwards *bitter in the belly*. And though it be sweet here for a time, it shall afterwards be crabbed and distasteful. Again, the cup of Christ is *here* bitter in the mouth, but sweet hereafter in the belly; here *sour* but hereafter *pleasant*: *You*, said he, *shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice;* but observe the end hereof, *Your sorrow shall be turned into joy**, but their rejoicing into weeping.

And this is therefore the word of truth, no man shall enjoy the cup of blessing, or drink out of the cup of salvation, but he that has first drunk of the cup of tribulation; he that has first known his fellowship with the sufferings of Christ, and of his holy mystical Cross: for those that suffer

* John xvi. 20.

with him, shall reign with him, and *no Cross, no Crown.*

Lean then upon his breast, for so does the *Bride* in *spirit**. Trust in *him*, and not in *man*†, nor in yourselves, for he will guide you best, because he is given you of God, to be your heavenly guide. And if it should be in a way under the Cross, (which way is proper to him,) yet it is notwithstanding, a way of joy and pleasantness, and all his holy paths are peace to those that love him. O, therefore, feel his holy drawings, and wait in his light upon his holy movings in your souls; *Stand still and see his salvation* wrought in you, by his *own arm*‡; that you may know him to be Jesus indeed, viz. *a Saviour*, as well from your *sins here*, as from the *wrath to come*; and that he may preserve you from vain thoughts, vain words, and vain conversations, yea, from the voluntary worship of this world, and from the slavish fear of man; to the end that he may work his own work in you, and make you conformable to his own blessed image; and that you may be made free by the Lord, through the power of his everlasting gospel, which is now again sounded forth by his own Angel, to the inhabitants of the earth, calling with a loud voice, *Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come*§. And you must feel this judgment in your hearts, that the Prince of this world, with all *his evil seed*, with all *his wrong plants*‖, and *appearances* may be judged in you; and that you may be witnesses upon earth for God, and the Lamb, that sits upon the throne, against all

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* Cant. viii. 5. † Jer. xvii. 5. ‡ Exod. xiv. 13, 14,
§ Rev. xiv. 6, 7. ‖ Matt. xv. 13.

darkness of men and devils: nay, against death, hell, and the grave: and that God may bless you with all sorts of blessings in Christ Jesus.

But yet I find myself pressed in spirit, to give you one warning more, viz. That you would not longer use vain words, (though true in themselves,) because they are worth nothing, for they take God's name in vain, that use it without life and power. And I entreat all those that endeavour to know God, and come up to the true life of his dear Son, that you make no profession of worship, without the feeling, preparing, and ordering of the true and overcoming power of God: for such worship is not of God, and such professors are *poor*, *lean*, *naked*, and *miserable* people; yea, they are only as chaff among the corn. And therefore beware you of that woman *Jezebel*, the *false prophetess*, of whom the early Christians were warned*, who has the *words* but not the *life* of the Son of God. Her preaching tends to death, she makes a talk of the sound and fame of Wisdom, (but will not afterwards harbour her when she cries in her streets,) she awakens none, she brings no man to God; she does not build up in the heavenly work, nor administer the right spiritual bread to the soul. For Christ only is the bread which gives life eternal, and those that will eat of this bread, must first come to him†; let him into their hearts, as Lord and Master, to provide and order his, to his praise, and as such must he be received, when he appears in their souls, ever as a refiner's fire, and as a fuller's soap, to purify and refine from all unrighteousness‡; yea, to reveal unto men their

* Rev. ii. 20. † John vi. 32, 33, 35, 51. ‡ Mal. iii. 2.

sins, and destroy the same with the brightness of his coming, and with the spirit of his mouth, in which no deceit is found. He is that light in the brightness of his coming, which you must love and whose testimony you must keep, and he is the quickening Spirit, whose breath of his mouth revives the soul, and destroys the sin that slays it: for all those that come to receive him in this office, in this way, and in this work, shall also know, that he is the *Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world**, the spiritual passover, the heavenly bread, the true vine which bringeth forth the new wine of the kingdom, the blessed olive tree†; yea, the tree of life, and eternal salvation, which grows in the midst of the paradise of God‡, whose leaves are for the healing of the nations.

This is a salutation to you all, from the holy and fervent love which God has poured into my heart and soul; who am in a travail to help the nations to be gathered to Christ, the light and salvation thereof§, that Zion may be the joy and Jerusalem the praise‖ of the whole earth. Amen, Amen.

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* John i. 29. † 1 Cor. v. 7. John vi. 51, xv. 1. Rom. xi. 24.
‡ Rev. ii. 7. § Isa. lx. 3. ‖ Ibid. lxii. 7.

FINIS.

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ON THE

GREAT LOVE OF GOD

TO

MANKIND,

THROUGH

Jesus Christ our Lord.

By THOMAS CHALKLEY.

Extracted from a Treatise in the Collection of his Works.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life. JOHN iii. 16.

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TO THE READER.

IN sincerity and unfeigned love, both to God and man, were these lines penned: I desire thee to peruse them in the same love, and then, peradventure, thou mayest find some sweetness in them. Expect not learned phrases, or florid expressions; for many times heavenly matter is wrapped up in plain expressions. It sometimes pleases God to reveal the mysteries of his kingdom, through the grace of his Son our Lord Jesus Christ, to babes and sucklings, and he oftentimes ordains praises out of their mouths; one of which, reader, I desire thou mayest be.

My intent in writing these sheets is, that they, through the help of God's grace and the good Spirit of Christ, may stir up true love in thee; first, to God and Christ, and then to man; then thou wilt be fit to be espoused to him who is altogether lovely (that is, Christ); which is the desire of him that is thy friend, more in heart than word.

T. CHALKLEY.

[A. D. 1697.]

ON

THE GREAT LOVE, &c.

HAVING been concerned for the good and welfare of the children of men, and having in my youthful days tasted of the infinite love of God, in and through his dear Son the holy Lamb Jesus, who laid down his life for the sins of the world; and, in my tender years reaped great benefit, through faith in, and obedience unto him: I have found, by experience, that one without the other, namely, faith without works, will not answer the end of the great love of Christ Jesus our Lord: in that he offered himself a sacrifice for all mankind, not for people to live in sin, but to take away the sin of the world: in a word, "Faith without works is dead." *James* ii. 20.

Christ first loved us, and paid that debt for us, that of ourselves we were not able to do. Oh, his infinite love! it hath oftentimes melted my soul into tenderness. [Oh!] that ever the sons of men should requite evil for good, or disobedience for such gracious obedience! I would to God, that all believers in Christ would live in that fear of God, and that love to Christ, that keepeth the heart clean; because nothing un-

clean can enter the kingdom of heaven. I do not mean a slavish fear, but fear that is wrought by love: for they that love the Lord, the great, everlasting God, will fear to offend him.

This is the matter that chiefly beareth stress on my mind at this time; the necessity of love to God and Christ, and one another: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." 1 *Cor.* ii. 9. It is joy unspeakable, and full of glory: but then we must love him, so as to keep his commandments. This is the work that I am very earnest in pressing people to, whether youth or aged, it is not too soon for the young, neither too late for the aged, to begin this work of obedience, through faith and love to God and Christ, if his Spirit is reproving or striving in them.

So that, in that ability which God hath given me, I would endeavour to stir up all to serve him, and to be in good earnest, and not to put the day of God, even of the mighty Jehovah, afar off; but to love the Lord unfeignedly, and with true obedience; since it is that sacrifice that is only acceptable to God; that is to say, To love him in deed and in truth, more than in word, and with tongue: for against such a people, the Lord, by his servant, complained in old time; "They (saith the Lord) draw nigh to me with their mouths, and with their lips do honour me:" but oh! their great misery was, their hearts were far from him; they did not love him with their whole hearts; that was their great fault. What lamentation shall be taken up for such as do so mock the Lord, the great God of love? Surely he will render vengeance, [or punishment,] as in

flames of fire, upon all the wicked and ungodly, and those that forget him. It is not by saying, but by doing, that we are justified through faith in Christ: not he that sayeth Lord, Lord, only: but he that doeth his will also, shall enter the kingdom.

Now the will of God, and Christ his Son, is, That we should love him above all; and in loving him, we should love one another: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." *Matt.* xxii. 37. "This is the first and great commandment; and the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets," ver. 38, 39, and 40.

If these two great commandments were obeyed, it would answer God's great love to us, in sending his Son to bless us. Oh! the glory of God, how it would shine! it would make the young men as valiants of Israel, and the old men as captains of thousands; then Christ would reign gloriously indeed, in the hearts of the children of men; here the Lamb and his followers (that walk in the light, and in that commandment that burns as a lamp) would get the victory over the Devil and his followers: but, on the contrary, this is the great error of mankind, they talk of God and Christ in words, but deny him in works: nay, some will not stick to say, It is impossible to keep the commands of Christ; there is no perfection on this side the grave: contrary to the saying of Christ, "Be ye perfect, even as your Father, which is in heaven, is perfect." *Mat.* v. 48. Yet say they, it is impossible; which is as much as to say, Christ is a hard master, in commanding what cannot be done, consequently out of their own mouths they will

be condemned. O! that people would but so love God, and his dear Son, as to strive to do his commands; for it is impossible they should obey, if they do neither believe nor endeavour: but let such know, that many shall seek, and shall not enter; much less, enter, if they do not seek: but we must, of necessity, strive, in obedience to his will, and by his assistance, (not in our own natural will,) to enter in at the strait gate: man would enter in with all his pleasant things; but God's will is, that he should be brought low that He might exalt him.

My intention is to awaken people out of the sleep of sin, which is death; and to stir them up to righteousness, and love to the Lord, and their neighbour, even with their whole heart: this is what my heart breathes to and supplicates the Lord of heaven for: then would the end of my labour, in his love, be answered; for great is the love of God in sending his Son, and also in sending his servants, and stirring them up to rouse people out of the sleep of security, that they might see the danger they are in, and how near they lie to the brink of the pit of burning. Oh! that people would but seriously consider that which is shewed and told them in the love of the lord. Oh! that it might be laid to heart. However, whether they will hear or forbear, God will be clear, and his servants also will be clear. But if we not only hear, but also obey, that peace that our Lord giveth to his followers, which passeth the understanding of men, will be our portion, and the lot of our inheritance for ever; but this is on condition of obedience, and keeping the commands of God: "If ye love me, keep my commandments." *John* xiv. 15, saith the Lord. So, if people live in saying, and not in

doing; in professing and confessing, yet still live in pride and high-mindedness, and in sin, it is apparent they do not love Christ Jesus, according to his own words, neither doth he justify them; it is only the doers that he will justify. The Apostle John says, "If a man say I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar," 1 *John* iv. 30, and by plain Scripture testimony, such are not of God: moreover, if he says, he loves Christ, yet doeth not his sayings, he is also a liar, and the truth is not in him, or Christ is not in him; who said, I am the truth; and thus man becomes reprobated; for Paul, writing to the brethren, saith, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith, prove your ownselves; know ye not your ownselves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates," 2 *Cor.* xiii. 5. Which indwelling of Christ is a great mystery to many; although Christ within, which the apostles preached, was the hope of the saints' glory, *Col.* i. 27. And, how earnest was Christ in prayer to his Father, that his followers might be one in him, and that they might be united together in one! *John* xvii. Such was the love of Christ to his church; now, what remains on the church's part? surely it is, that we love him again; for, saith *John*, "He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love," 1 *John* iv. 8. They that dwell in enmity, are not of the children of God, but the children of Satan; who always hated the appearance of Christ, the light of the world, and yet stirreth up those that are led by his dark spirit, to war against him, and his seed in his children.

But indeed it is as Christ hath said, Men love darkness rather than light; and how strange is it, seeing the one is so glorious, and the other so miserable? but the reason is, as Christ hath

shewed, because their deeds are evil. *John* iii. 19. That is indeed the very cause; for if their deeds were good, they would love the light, which is Christ Jesus, the Lord of Life and Glory, and bring their deeds to him, that he might judge them, who will give righteous judgment to every man, according to his works. *John* v. 29. The righteous will have their portion in the resurrection of life, joy, and peace in the holy Ghost; but the wicked, in the resurrection of damnation. Oh! that I might be instrumental, in the hand of the Lord, to open the eyes of some that are spiritually blind, that they might see the splendour, the beauty, and the great glory of the dear Son of God, that most excellent Light which God hath prepared, according to good old Simeon's testimony of him, "Thou hast," says he, "prepared" him "a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." *Luke* ii. 32. A glorious light indeed! He is *my* chiefest joy: I would not part with him for all the pomp and vain glory of the world; neither would I have the shining beams and glorious rays (which comfort me for well-doing, and reprove me for, and discover the contrary) clouded from my sight and understanding, for the finest gold or choicest rubies. The universal love of Christ is everlasting to them that are open-hearted unto him, and to all that will hear his voice, so as to obey it; for he says, "I stand at the door and knock," that is, the door of the heart of man, "if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." *Rev* iii. 20. And *John* says, "We have known and believed the love that God hath to us: God is love, and

he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him." 1 *John* iv. 16. A heavenly habitation, and glorious dwelling-place! Who would but endeavour to dwell in love, and forsake enmity, that they might attain unto such eternal happiness, as to have their abode with the Lord!

This fulfils the words of Christ, "For he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." *John* xiv. 17. How was he to be in them? A comforter for well-doing, that they might have the hope of glory; and a reprover of sin, self-righteousness, and wrong judgment. Indeed it was the great love of God, in thus sending his beloved Son a light into this dark world, to shew people their evil deeds, and to condemn sin in the flesh; for he is the sinful world's condemnation, as well as a Saviour and Justifier of the righteous, and holy believer. The Jews of old hated him, and many of them did intend to darken his bright and shining light, but some of the Jews believed on him, and after they came truly to believe on his name, spread his gospel of truth and glad tidings amongst the children of men, and also suffered for his name's sake. It is also said, "He came unto his own, and his own received him not, but as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." *John* i. 11, 12. But what say such to him, as account themselves spiritual Jews, (see *Rom.* ii. 28.), I mean those that call themselves by his name? why, many of them trample upon his light and appearance, and despise the spirit of his grace, which is a swift witness against evil, and lets men see what is good, and what is bad; comforts for the one, and brings judgment and condemnation

for the other. By this we may know Christians from Anti-christians, and lovers of Christ from them that love him not; if we love him, we become subjects to him, subject to do his will. And if we love him thus unfeignedly with all our might and mind, and our neighbours as ourselves, and with the sword of the Spirit valiantly encounter with the Devil and Satan; then shall we be his subjects, and he will receive us into his warfare, and through him we shall be victorious: for the Lamb and his followers will have the victory.

I would have all to cast down that which they glory in (that is not right in his sight) at his foot-stool, and do like the poor penitent woman, that lay and wept at his feet. *Luke* vii. 38. She thought all little enough to get into his favour. Christ himself also was meek and lowly, "Learn of me," said he, "for I am meek and lowly in heart." *Matt.* xi. 22. [Yet] all power in heaven and earth was given unto him.—"Take me," said he, "for an example," when he washed his servant's feet. Seeing his love was so great to them, and is also to us, let us love him again, not with feigned love, but with love that may manifest us to be his followers, and in this love let us love one another. "A new commandment said our Lord give I unto you, that ye love one another: as I have loved you, that ye also love one another: by this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." *John* xiii. 34, 35. Christ's love was unfeigned to his disciples, nay, to all the world in general; for what greater love can there be, than for a man to lay down his life for his friend; and he not only lay down his life for his friends, but for his enemies also. *Rom.* v. 10. So that his love

was great and unfeigned. We ought with the same love to love him again, since that he loved us first; and this cannot be without obedience to his commands. Thus undoubtedly we should, with true love, love him, and one another. This love is exceeding precious, it thinks no evil, and we may be sure, will not do any willingly or knowingly. If a man seeth his neighbour or brother in that which is not right, he prayeth to the Lord to help him, and tenderly admonisheth him: yea, if having this love he woundeth, his wounds are faithful, for "Faithful are the wounds of a friend." *Prov.* xxvii. 6. He that is thus endued with love, is not hindered from reproving his brother, but if there be a cause, it rather stirs him up to be faithful therein, without respect of persons. Oh! the love that is raised in them that love the Lord above all, it is great to the sons and daughters of men; it doeth wonderful things; it is valiant for God; it overcomes its enemies: it is not overcome with evil, but it often overcomes evil with good: it smiteth sin in the gate (that is, in its first appearance) before it be entered into man, so as to subject him thereunto; it gets victory over the devil, for he cannot stand before God's love. I would to God that people did but know the virtue of love to Christ, and one another in him, it would cause them, for the enjoyment thereof, to forsake all manner of enmity one against another, and all things else, how near or dear soever; yea, though they were as a right hand, or a right eye, they would be forsaken for its sake, and for the sake of him that first loved us.

If all people would obey these two commandments, (*Mat.* xxii. 37, 40.) the whole law and the

prophets, yea, and the gospel too, would be all obeyed.

But self is a great enemy unto man, and doth very much hinder his eternal happiness; it shutteth the ear from hearing the cause of the widow and fatherless, or of the needy, and drowns the cry of the oppressed; to whom we ought not only to lend an ear, but also to administer relief, according to their necessity and our ability. But mankind are too apt to despise the base or low things of the world, and to join with that which is pleasant to the eye, and agreeable to the lust of the heart, (like Dives, the rich glutton of old, who loved self better than poor Lazarus,) but not to consider that which is lasting, and would do them good for ever. How shall I express the excellent glory and eternal sweetness of this love to the Lord and our neighbour!

Now I would shew some of the many snares of death and Satan:

First, Some are too apt to judge one another, and to speak evil of things they know not, except by report and supposition, which too often lets in enmity, and is not according to the mind of Christ, but is a snare of the enemy of man's salvation. Surely, if people were sensible thereof, they would not so hardly censure one another: for indeed, we ought to be well satisfied before we give judgment, and then it ought to be in love and not in enmity. It is better to suffer than to censure, or to be judged than to judge. "Judge not, that ye be not judged," *Mat.* vii. 1. said the judge of heaven and earth. To forgive one another is every Christian's duty, and without which we cannot justly expect God to forgive us our trespasses, as Christ taught. *Mat.* vi. 14, 45.

Secondly, Many are rebelling against God, and doing despite to the Spirit of grace in their own hearts, and trespassing one against another, not living in love, but in enmity against God and one another. The judgment of man is terrible to the rebellious; how much more, if men rebel against God our Saviour, will his judgment be just and dreadful, as he hath not only power to kill the body, but can afterwards cast the soul into hell? Oh! that the sons and daughters of men would but fear to offend him, the King of eternal glory.

Thirdly, I have also many times been grieved, when I have heard cursing and swearing, and the Lord's name taken in vain, which many too much abound in, by sea and land, and too little consider, that God will not hold them guiltless, *Exod.* xx. 7. Oh! the deep sense of this great sin, it hath been, and is, of great moment, and is a great concern on my mind: vengeance from heaven is, and will be the portion of all such, that thus violate the mind and will of God. Judgment, judgment, is the lot and inheritance of all the wicked, who remain and live in wickedness. Although the Lord is slow to anger, and of great loving kindness, and his mercy endureth for ever to them that truly repent of evil, and do that which is good; yet he has also prepared weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth, for them that continually live in sin. But those that are willing to put the day of God afar off, are ready to say, Christ is our Advocate with the Father; he maketh intercession for our sins, (Very well,) but it is conditionally; it is, if thou will repent, and sin no more. Mark that well—repentance without sinning no more, will not do. *John* viii. 11. Confession is very good, but confession with-

out forsaking, will stand in little stead in the day of account.

Fourthly, Also being drunk with wine, or with strong drink—Drunkenness is a great sin against God, and an abuse of God's mercies and good creatures. And by this frame of drunkenness, men are often fitted for any business that their master the devil may call them to; so that this great sin ought to be strictly watched against. Surely if men had any good desires in their hearts, or any love to God, they would refrain from such great wickedness. I admire how people can expect mercy from God, or the intercession of Christ, when they are piercing his side, and putting him to open shame: for those that are sinning against him, are piercing him. But he that loveth Christ Jesus, the Lord of life and glory, so as to keep his commandments, the Lord will love him, and intercede for him, and make himself known unto him; according to his words, which he spake, "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me, and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father; and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him," *John* xiv. 21.

Fifthly, Covetousness, which is idolatry, is also another great snare of the enemy, and many are caught therein. It is in vain for the covetous to say, he hath a share in the love of God; for he hath neither love to the Lord, nor to his neighbour. A poor naked man might ask him long enough for relief, or for his coat, before he would give him his hand to help, or coat either, or any manner of relief, although Christ expressly commanded it, "Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou away." *Mat.* v. 42. How can any be

so hard-hearted, to see his brother's, or his neigbour's poverty, and not administer of his ability to the needful's necessity; but says the covetous or miserable man, I have children, or a family to take care of: but too often covetousness brings a curse, and not a blessing, upon family and children also. Perhaps one that is covetous may say, that charity begins at home: but let him remember, that if it doth begin there, the consequence most commonly is very bad, when it ends there. Every Christian hath need to have charity in his breast, in a two-fold sense, or else there is no proper pretence to Christianity: in short, covetousness is out of the love either to God or man: all these, with abundance more, that I shall forbear to mention, are eminent snares of the devil; and Satan layeth them according to the propensity of man and woman, and suits them with their nature. Oh! I will warrant thee he will colour them finely, and put a pleasant gloss upon them, to betray thy soul, and keep it in bondage for ever.

Sixthly, It is he that tells the murderer, that it is better to live a merry life and short, than to take pains and care all his life-time; and the thief likewise, with the robber.

Seventhly, It is he also that tells the whoremongers and drunkards, that so many people are in these practices, because it is natural for people to be so overcome: but he doth not tell them, that by nature all are children of wrath, and that without this lustful nature be overcome, there is no salvation. *Eph.* ii. 3.

Eighthly, It is he that tells the swearers, they are so used to it, that it is impossible for them to leave it off. He never bids them repent and forsake, that they might find mercy with God and

Christ that died for them, but died not that they should live in sin.

Ninthly, It is he that tells the covetous, it is good to be saving, and not to spend all his substance in gluttony and pride; no, he will bid him hate pride, and that he should not give much alms, though rich in this world; for the devil will tell him, that it is proud people do it only in ambition, and to be seen of men; but he will not tell him, it is a sin to be covetous: he also tells the proud that they are counted happy, and that pride is counted good for promoting the commonwealth, and that it is as good to be out of the world, as out of the fashion; he tells them that pride is neatness, and how many pretty excuses he has, to keep people in pride, is admirable; he doth not tell them, that Christ the Lord was meek and lowly, and that they should take him for an example. He, the Lord, did not come in splendour and glory, outwardly; but clothed and adorned with the robes of righteousness and love. This is my beloved: may he be thine also, gentle reader: I entreat you, O ye children of men, both sons and daughters, do not offend Christ by disobeying him; (but I beseech you, in his sweet and tender love,) if you have offended him by sinning against him, Oh! for the Lord's sake, and your own soul's sake, do so no more, but unfeignedly repent.

Now, if the poor creature did but love the Lord its Maker, above all, and its fellow-creature as itself, the enemy of mankind would be overcome, and we made more than conquerors, through him that hath loved us, even Jesus Christ our Lord. Self would then be abhorred as in dust and ashes, and the Lord would be loved and glorified above all, for which end he created mankind: but, cer-

tain it is, that this end cannot be answered, nor the Lord so loved, unless sin be forsaken and hated; for the devil is the author of sin, and Christ of righteousness.

"I," says Christ, "am the way and the truth and the life," *John* xiv. 6, and *John* viii. 12, "I am the Light of the world." Oh! saith my soul, in abundance of love and good-will unto the sons and daughters of men, that they would but walk in the way of truth, and the true light of the world, then they would see clearly the snares of Satan; which that every one, male and female, (especially those that profess Christianity) might do, and escape the same, is the very desire of my soul.

T. CHALKLEY.

FINIS.

W. and S. Graves, Printers,
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THOUGHTS

ON THE

IMPORTANCE

OF

RELIGION.

William Allen

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No. 3.

THOUGHTS,

&c.

EMBARKED on the stream of time, and carried forward with uniform and irresistible force, how many thousands do we see amusing themselves in the pursuit of shadows, or gliding along in stupid unconcern, notwithstanding their surrounding companions daily disappear, and are gone they know not whither. We also, fellow-traveller, are making rapid progress in our course, and it will surely be wise to devote a few moments to reflect upon the most important of all subjects which can possibly occupy our attention;—the purpose of our existence, and the end of our voyage.

If we consider our animal frame, composed of parts essential to the well-being of the whole, and put together with inimitable skill, or survey the means that have been appointed to sustain this

fabric, during the limited period of its existence; if we look upon the inferior animals, or study the structure of the vegetable tribes; if, by means of the faculties we possess, we endeavour to understand a little of the laws which appear to regulate the operations incessantly taking place in this lower world; or, if we lift our eyes to those luminous bodies scattered through the immensity of space, all proceeding harmoniously in the paths prescribed to them,—should not our souls be filled with awe and reverence? Nothing short of Infinite Wisdom could have effected this: nothing short of Infinite Power could sustain it for a moment.

This Wisdom and this Power, O fellow-traveller, is GOD, even *thy* God. He has condescended to create thee what thou art. Kind and benevolent, as unlimited in power, He has provided for thy comfort, thy accommodation, thy pleasure, even here. He has furnished thee with suitable food, has enamelled the fields with flowers, and instructed every warbler of the grove in his peculiar song. He has endowed thee with reason, whereby thou mayest understand a little portion of his wonders; and, to crown the whole, has given thee a capacity to acquaint thyself with Him, the Author of them all. Every thing proclaims that the object of the Creator is the happiness of his

creatures; and if thou be not happy, the fault is in thyself. Do not suppose that thou art placed in this transitory scene, merely to eat, to drink, and to sleep, and, after a few years, to vanish away like a dream or a vision of the night. No:—thy great Creator has called thee into existence, at that period which was consistent with his Supreme Will; and though thy frame shall go to decay when it may please him to call for the spirit which animates it, yet be assured that this spirit shall exist for ever. When the present life ceases, thou must enter upon eternity, which will be either miserable beyond description, or unspeakably happy. The few and uncertain moments of thy present state are all that are allowed thee to prepare for it. Be aroused then to a just consideration of thy condition; venture not to sleep on the brink of a precipice, but apply thyself in earnest to the great work, before that awful proclamation is made,—"He which is filthy, let him be filthy still *(a)*."

The only mean of becoming happy here and hereafter, is by earnestly endeavouring to know and perform the *Will of God*. This we cannot do of ourselves; but *He* is graciously pleased to enable us, by giving to every one of his rational creatures, a portion of his good Spirit *(b)*, which

is secretly operating upon the soul. This it is which makes us uneasy when we do wrong, and which fills the mind with comfort and joy when we do right. Thus the Divine Being communicates with his creatures: thus would draw them to Himself; and in proportion as they attend to these secret impulses, He manifests himself more and more clearly to them, and they become more closely united to Him. In this way the holy men *(c)* of old were inspired, and were employed as mediums to convey the most important truths to the rest of mankind. Their writings collected together, are called the Holy Scriptures, and clearly point out that conduct which will be acceptable to God *(d)*. But above all, they inform us, that in the fulness of time, our merciful Creator *(e)* displayed his love to his rational creatures in a more conspicuous manner than he had done in preceding dispensations, by sending among them his beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, as a pattern and example to the end of time, and as the Redeemer of men. In him was seen what the world never beheld before; a person, with all the feelings of human nature, and yet, without sin: by Him, the means of reconciliation and union with God were most clearly and affectingly displayed, and through Him, those who feel the weight of their

transgressions, must seek for reconciliation. He is the Mediator between sinful man and the Source of purity; and though, having accomplished his mission in the flesh, and offered up his life on the cross as a propitiation for the sins of mankind, he is no longer beheld with the outward eye; yet he is present in the hearts of all those who are striving to know and perform the Divine Will; he is influencing them to good thoughts and good actions, enabling them to overcome their perverse natural inclinations, and to subdue their wills; and thus he is *purifying*, and rendering them acceptable, through himself, to his Heavenly Father. "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me*(f)*." And again, "If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our *abode* with him *(g)*." Infinite condescension! Unutterable love! His knocks are the monitions of his grace and good Spirit in the heart; and to attend to these and follow them, is to *open* unto him. This leads to our purification and consequent fitness for a closer communion with him. The Heavenly Visitor will now be no longer 'as a wayfaring man who tarrieth only for a night,' but "We

will make our *abode* with him." This is the essence of true religion; and, let our denominations in this world be what they may, if this be our happy experience, we shall belong to "the general assembly and church of the first-born," whose names "are written in heaven *(h)*."

But this Divine Spirit, which strives with man for his good, if neglected or resisted, will be gradually withdrawn; we may harden our hearts against it, despise its reproofs, and silence its voice, *for a time*. We shall then be left to ourselves, and permitted to follow our own evil propensities: our souls will be in a state of defilement and alienation from the source of true happiness, and if we die in this state, dreadful indeed will be our portion. *That* witness for God which we have refused to hear, will then speak out in a voice not to be silenced, and from which we shall be no longer able to escape.

Now is the acceptable time; now, while we have health and strength, let us use all diligence to acquaint ourselves with God, that we may be at peace; for though he desires the salvation *(i)* of all, he *will* be sought unto, and he has graciously promised to be found of those who seek him aright.

Our attempts will be much promoted by occasional and frequent retirement from the hurry and bustle of life, if it were only for one quarter of an hour at a time; that we may pour out our souls unto our heavenly Father in prayer, beseeching that he would manifest unto us *his* will, help us to subdue *our own*, and bring it into conformity with his. A diligent perusal of the Holy Scriptures is also an excellent mean of strengthening our good desires, and comforting us under trial, if we entreat the divine blessing upon it: for this only can open our understandings to receive those eternal truths which are indeed hid from the wise and prudent of this world, but revealed to the babes in Christ *(k)*.

True prayer is by no means so difficult as some have imagined: every secret aspiration to God, even if no words be uttered, is prayer; and we may be in the exercise of it, even when our hands are engaged in our lawful occupations. This is the prayer which our Lord enjoined to his disciples, that they might not enter into temptation *(l)*. Many awakened souls have suffered great loss, and made for themselves a long wilderness, by consulting with those who were as much at a loss as themselves, and going from one learned man to another, to seek that *without*,

which can only be found *within*. The kingdom of God, said Christ, *(m)* is within you: his constant reference was to *this*: his constant aim, to turn men from a dependence upon the ceremonies of religion to the essence of it. When we are so far convinced of these great truths as to give up ourselves wholly to God, and can say with sincerity, "Thy will, and not mine, be done;" then we shall enjoy that heavenly communion which constitutes the happiness of the blessed above. Narrow prejudices will no longer exist, our souls will expand with love to our fellow-creatures, and we shall consider all mankind as branches of the same family, having one common Father. We shall feel a real interest in the happiness of all within our influence, and endeavour to promote it to the utmost of our power. These are the effects which would be produced by submitting to the operation of Divine Grace in the heart. "We shall then experimentally know that God is good. We shall be qualified to taste and see *how* gracious he is, by his influence upon our minds, by those virtuous thoughts which he awakens in us, by those secret comforts and refreshments which he conveys into our souls, and by those ravishing joys and inward satisfactions, which are perpetually springing up and diffusing themselves

among all the thoughts of good men. He is lodged in our very essence, and is as a soul within the soul to irradiate its understanding, rectify its will, purify its passions, and enliven all the powers of man. How happy is an intellectual being who, by prayer and meditation, by virtue and good works, opens this communication between God and his own soul! Though the whole creation frown upon him, and all nature look black about him, he has his light and support within him, that are able to cheer his mind, and bear him up in the midst of all those horrors which encompass him. He knows that his Helper is at hand, and is always nearer to him than any thing else can be, which is capable of annoying or terrifying him. In the midst of calumny or contempt, he attends to that Being who whispers better things within his soul, and whom he looks upon as his defender, his glory, and the lifter up of his head. In his deepest solitude and retirement, he knows that he is in company with the Greatest of beings; and perceives within himself such real sensations of his presence, as are more delightful than any thing that can be met with in the conversation of his creatures. Even in the hour of death, he considers the pains of his dissolution to be nothing else but the breaking down of that partition, which stands betwixt his soul

and the sight of that Being who is always present with him, and is about to manifest Himself to him in fulness of joy *(n)*." If we duly ponder these things, fellow-traveller, and give up our hearts to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the end of *our* journey will be the beginning of a new existence, inconceivably glorious, and eternally happy!

(*a*) Rev. ch. xxii. verse 11.
(*b*) Titus, ch. ii. verse 11.
(*c*) 2 Peter, ch. i. verse 21.
(*d*) 2 Tim. ch. iii. verse 15—17.
(*e*) Gal. ch. iv. verse 4.
(*f*) Rev. ch. iii. verse 20.
(*g*) John, ch. xiv. verse 23.
(*h*) Heb. ch. xii. verse 23.
(*i*) 1 Tim. ch. ii. verse 4.
(*k*) Matt. ch. xi. verse 25.
(*l*) Matt. ch. xxvi. verse 41.
(*m*) Luke, ch. xvii. verse 21.
(*n*) Addison.

FINIS.

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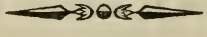
AN

ADDRESS

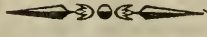
TO THOSE

IN

LOW CIRCUMSTANCES.



"All things work together for good, to them that love God."
ROM. viii. 28.



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No. 4.

AN ADDRESS, &c

My dear Brethren and Sisters,

Whom I salute in that love which ought to unite the families of the whole earth, since we are all the children of one common Parent; all subject to the same feelings; all partakers of the mercies of God, and invited by our heavenly Father to become inhabitants of his kingdom of glory, when we have done with the things of time, and death hath closed our mortal eyes upon all that now surrounds us: I have often thought of you with desires that you may know where to seek support and comfort, in those difficulties and trials you sometimes meet with. I have desired you may believe that the goodness of God, the gracious Lord of the universe, is not confined to any rank of men. Do not think he loves you less than others, because you often feel the want of the conveniences, and sometimes can scarcely procure the necessaries of life. Every station has trials belonging to it, and they who abound in riches, and appear to be the happiest, are often feeling, in secret, griefs and anxieties to which you are strangers.—They do not always enjoy their possessions. Riches and power bring cares along with them, and expose to temptations which do not attack the poor. Such as are in

high stations, and feel they are not happy, would be willing to exchange places with the poor if they could know real peace: while the poor are thinking how truly they should enjoy life, could they procure the possessions of their wealthy neighbours. But the truth is, happiness is equally offered to every body by that Almighty Being, who is called the Father of the Universe. The advice which is given us in the Bible is this: Acquaint thyself with God, and be at peace. This is the one sure means of comfort, whether for rich or poor. It is only for want of knowing God, that so many in the world are unhappy; for if they were willing to follow this counsel, they would know that he is graciously disposed to bless every one whom he hath created.

Perhaps some of you may be ready to say, "If God loves me, why do I feel so many pains, so much distress and anxiety?" But, dear people, it is not by the design of a gracious God that we are miserable: on the contrary, he designed us for happiness; and though none of us can pass through life without pain and sorrow, these pains and sorrows are frequently the effects of sin, and spring originally from our own errors, and the disorders of human nature in its fallen state. Our heavenly Father, like a good physician, intends that all the troubles of this life shall prove as good and wholesome medicines, to cure us of our faults, which are like a sickness of the soul; and if we were but willing to learn the lessons he would teach, we should know that help is laid upon One who is mighty to save, and able to deliver to the uttermost, all that come unto God by him. (*Heb.* vii. 25.)

O! you that have many difficulties to encounter; you who sometimes think there is no-

body so unhappy as yourselves! consider, I entreat you, have you not always been more ready to think of your troubles than to remember the blessings and mercies of God? Try to find out what is the cause of your greatest affliction. I think I may safely say, there are no people so unhappy as those who are forgetful of God. How frequently do poor families suffer through the bad conduct of a man, who spends in intemperate drinking the price of his labour, which should provide for his helpless little ones! How many young people are not able to get forward in life, because they are known to have been bred up under parents who have set them an ill example, and too frequently encouraged them to tell lies, steal, and keep idle company! Now if the hearts of people were more generally inclined to do what they know to be right, they would avoid the greatest miseries of life; for religion would teach them to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with their God. (*Micah* vi. 8.) It would make them industrious and sober, desirous to bring up their families in the love and fear of Almighty God, and thus remove the greatest of their real troubles. They would learn to ask for the blessing of God upon their honest labours, and surely he would give them every thing he saw needful for their souls and bodies. Religion would teach them to bless him if they were favoured with health and strength; and if they were visited by sickness, enable them to bear it with patience, and then they would learn many useful lessons from such afflictions, and know what solid peace is given to them who patiently submit to their heavenly Father's will; for the Apostle Paul says, "All things work together for good, to them that love God,"

(*Rom.* viii. 28.) I know that those who have large families to provide for, have often many cares, but I know also that our heavenly Father encourages us to cast our cares upon him, for He careth for us. (1 *Pet.* v. 7.)

I hope there is not one amongst those I now address, who is so ignorant as not to know that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (*John* iii. 16.) Know you not "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye, through his poverty, might be rich? (2 *Cor.* viii. 9.) rich in those treasures which are laid up for all his obedient followers, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, nor thieves break through and steal. The history of this gracious Saviour of the world, and the account of his wondrous acts of love towards poor perishing souls, with the doctrines he and his apostles taught, expressive of the nature of the Christian religion, are contained in that part of the Scripture called the New Testament; which, my dear friends, if you have any love for your dearest and best interests, I do most earnestly recommend to your perusal. But if you would read it to profit, do so with your hearts raised to God, beseeching him to enable you *so* to read that you may understand the sacred truths which it contains.

In one of the sermons our Lord Jesus Christ preached to the people, he told them to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, assuring them that all things needful should be added, (*Matth.* ch. vi.) He directed them to consider the fowls of the air, and the lilies of the field, adding, "Wherefore, if God so clothe the

grass of the field, &c. shall he not much more clothe you?" This then ought to convince us, that the want of true religion is the cause of the miseries of which we complain. Religion will indeed prove as a sovereign balsam to sweeten every bitter cup, and strengthen us to pass with patience the days of our mortal course. It will discover to us many comforts in every situation, and we shall know that it is the true pearl of great price, more precious than silver or gold.

Perhaps some of you may be ready to say "What have *I* to do with religion, *I* who am so much taken up with my family: I have scarcely time to take a little rest. They who have nothing to do, may indeed think of religion, but as for me, I am obliged to work like a slave to earn a little bread." Should any of you think something of this kind, let me answer, you have a very wrong notion of religion, if you suppose none can attend to its dictates but they who have much leisure. Neither the wisdom of this world, nor much leisure, is absolutely necessary for the exercise of true religion. The more time we have, the more indeed we ought singly to devote to the worship and service of our greatest and best friend, for such the Almighty is to us:—but religion consists in a state of heart which loves God above all things, and looks up to him as our Father, our Friend, the Teacher of man, who waits to be gracious, who invites us to learn of himself. Let us consider this, and we shall know, that in the midst of unavoidable business, we can lift up our thoughts to him, and he will accept the prayers of the heart: these will arise before him when our lips cannot utter a petition. But, alas! it is for want of desiring to know God, that so many are strangers unto him, and

to the state of their own hearts, and Oh! what a pity it is, that any should miss of the happiness of knowing this great and good, this holy and glorious Being! for, This (said the Saviour of mankind) is life eternal, to *know* thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. (*John* xvii. 3.)

What a comfort, what a consolation it is to know him as the God of love! and such the scriptures declare him to be. "God is love, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him." (1 *John* iv. 16.) This is the reason why he requires us to seek and serve, to honour and obey him. And O! there is every reason to love him above all. He crowns our days with tender mercies, with abundant loving kindness: he is a kind and compassionate Father, the Fountain of Light, of Life and Love. You who are Mothers, hear the words of tender mercy with which he condescends to speak to all who have put their trust in him: "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee." (*Isa.* xlix. 15.) Such is the love and watchful care of God our heavenly Father, of whom it is declared, "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd," (*Isa.* xl. 11.) "Behold, he that keepeth Israel, shall neither slumber nor sleep." (*Ps.* cxxi. 4.)

From the very beginning of time to the present day, he has made himself known to the world by unbounded, unmerited mercy, goodness, and love, declaring that he afflicts not willingly, nor grieves the children of men; for like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them who fear him. And will you then live in forgetfulness of Him who never forgets you?

Will you remain in bondage to sin and Satan, when you are called by the gospel of Jesus into the glorious liberty of the sons and daughters of God? Will you obey Satan, the enemy of your souls, rather than serve that gracious God in whom you live, and move, and have your being? O! think how great and holy He is, who is Lord of heaven and earth; before whom bright and glorious angels fall prostrate in adoration. Think how he created all things by the word of his power, and upholds them continually.

If he were to command the sun to depart from the heavens, it would vanish away; if he were to forbid the earth to bring forth fruit, we must perish from off it. And will you, who breathe his air, and partake of the benefits of his creation, will you complain you have had no proof of his love? Will you to whom he has given life for such glorious purposes, be so ungrateful as to forget him, your kind Benefactor? Well might king David the psalmist say, "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained; what is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou visitest him?" (*Ps.* viii. 3. 4.) Above all, remember we have immortal souls dwelling in these bodies;—souls which are a spark of life, and must exist to all eternity.

The day will soon arrive, when we shall feel that the chief business of this life, is to prepare for another and a better world. Then we shall find it signified little whether, in this life, we were rich or poor, learned or ignorant as to this world's wisdom; but the only thing worth our attention will be, whether we have come to the saving knowledge of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. I believe there never was, nor ever will

be a person born into the world, whom our Almighty Father is not willing to teach the nature of true religion: and if multitudes pass through life without knowing it, it is because they have rebelled against that inward conviction which would have led them to a knowledge of themselves, and awakened desires after an acquaintance with God. If then so many may be said to be ignorant of their duty, the fault is their own; for if they have but a sincere desire of knowing what is right, that gracious God, who knows our most secret thoughts, will lift up the light of his countenance on their souls. The Saviour himself sufficiently assured his followers, that none, at last, would be able to plead ignorance as an excuse for the neglect of their duty. The apostle tells us, "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to *all* men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world. (*Titus* ii. 11, 12.) Now all who obey these *first* teachings, will find an increasing wish to be more and more taught of God; and, as they yield to this inward something, which pleads with and admonishes them in the secret of their hearts, they will discover that they have been mercifully visited by God, with his "Day-spring from on high." They will know what the apostle meant when he declared, "The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart," (*Rom.* x. 8.) And what the blessed Redeemer meant by "The kingdom of God is within you." (*Luke* xvii. 21.)

It is indeed the privilege of the religion of Jesus Christ, (the gospel dispensation under which we live,) that there is not an absolute *necessity* for the teaching of men, in order to comprehend those truths which relate to the salvation of our souls.

The prophet Jeremiah, who lived many hundred years before the appearance of our Saviour amongst men, was commanded by the Almighty to describe the Gospel-day in this manner, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the House of Israel, and with the House of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt. But this shall be the covenant that I will make,—saith the Lord; I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they shall be my people: and they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord." (*Jer.* xxxi. 31—34.) If when you feel the secret checks of that Divine Teacher, who reproves you whenever you do wrong, you would yield to what he requires, you would feel the reward of peace in your hearts; a peace promised by the Saviour of the world to his obedient children—"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you," &c. (*John* xiv. 27.)

This will be putting the precepts of the Christian religion in practice. But though it is a great favour to read or to hear the instructive truths contained in the Scriptures, yet this will be to no purpose if you do not *obey* as well as hear them. The apostle Paul tells us, (2 *Cor.* iv. 6.) that "God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." The more we attend to the discoveries of this divine Light, the

more we feel that there is much in our hearts which wants to be enlightened, and cleansed from evil. Then we shall learn, that the soul stands in need of something to support and nourish it, as well as the body; and that, as the soul is immortal, its food must be spiritual. We shall then hear and joyfully understand, what the holy Redeemer said formerly, when he declared, "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." (*John* vi. 35.) And again, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the Light of Life." (*John* viii. 12.)

This then is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, but men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil. (*John* iii. 19.) The evil deeds of men make them prefer darkness to light. They are not desirous in general, to accept of, and benefit by the remedy provided by the infinite love of God; they are not sufficiently concerned to walk while *they* have the light. It ever was, and ever will be the language of the gracious Redeemer, "Look unto me and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth." (*Isa.* xlv. 22.)

"Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (*Matth.* xi. 28.) Do not then, I earnestly and affectionately entreat you, do not deceive yourselves by thinking, since God is merciful, and Jesus Christ is willing to be the Saviour of all men, that you need not be anxious about your present conduct, or future state. This would be a dreadful error indeed. It is true that Jesus, the Redeemer of his people, has laid down his life for us, that we might depart from evil, and stand accepted in the divine sight; that we may be delivered from the bondage of sin

and Satan, and brought into the glorious liberty of the sons and daughters of God; but if we would profit by these proofs of his love, we must accept of his salvation on the terms he offers it; we must be his true disciples by *forsaking* sin, and endeavouring to do the will of God upon earth as it is done in heaven. Remember, we cannot enter the kingdom of everlasting rest, to join the celestial company of saints and angels, till we have learned to lament our past transgressions, and have suffered the blessed Saviour of the world to cleanse our hearts from evil, that they may be filled with the graces of his Holy Spirit. He has given us all a time for repentance; he has offered us the means of being saved in him, with an everlasting salvation; but, if we neglect these means, if we suffer this day of gracious visitation to pass away unimproved, dreadful indeed will be our state.

Recollect you are *now* in *time*, *to-morrow* you may be in *eternity!* Work then while it is day: for the night cometh wherein no man can work. The blessed Jesus himself declared, in effect, to the Jews, If ye believe not that I am he, and die in your sins, whither I go ye cannot come. (*John* viii. 21, 24.)

Do not think that you are sufficiently prepared for eternity, if you go to some place of worship, and abstain from gross sins: for if you become acquainted with your own hearts, through that grace with which the Almighty mercifully visits the children of men, you will be humble under a sense of his goodness, and your own unworthiness; you will then become of the number of those whom he hath blessed, saying, "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted; blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (*Matth.* v. 3, 4.)

And you dear young people, who may read these lines, let me, in real desire for your happiness, invite you to remember your Creator in the days of your youth; remember that he sees all your actions, and knows all your thoughts; that, without his blessing, you cannot really prosper; you could not be happy, even if you possessed all this world contains. It is only by knowing and serving the Lord that you can have peace; for, "There is no peace to the wicked, saith my God," (*Isa.* lvii. 21.) Be encouraged then, to look up to your heavenly Father as your best friend. He hath assured us, They that seek wisdom early shall find her, (*Prov.* viii. 17.) Ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened. (*Matth.* vii. 7.)

The blessed Jesus received little children, saying "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God." At the same time he declared, "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein." (*Mark* x. 14, 15.) Be humble then, be simple, be obedient to the teachings of Him, who will be as a Shepherd to the little ones of his flock. Do not continue in the practice of any thing, which, when you have done it, brings uneasiness over your minds, but follow those things that make for your peace; this attention to *small* things is the way to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. He that is faithful in the *little*, will be made ruler over more. To-day then, O! to-day, if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts; hear and obey and your souls shall live!

FINIS.

W. & S. Graves, Printers,
66, Cheapside, London.

EXTRACT

FROM

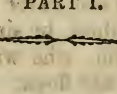
THE ADVICE

OF

WILLIAM PENN

TO HIS CHILDREN.

PART I.



London:

PRINTED FOR THE

TRACT ASSOCIATION OF THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS,

By William and Samuel Graves, 66, Cheapside.

1819.

No. 5.

EXTRACT, &c.

MY DEAR CHILDREN,

NOT knowing how long it may please God to continue me amongst you, I am willing to embrace this opportunity of leaving you my advice and counsel; and I both beseech you and charge you, by the relation you have to me, and the affection I have always shewn to you, and indeed received from you, that you lay up the same in your hearts, as well as your heads, with a wise and religious care.

I will begin with that which is the beginning of all true wisdom and happiness,—the holy fear of God.

Children, fear God:—that is to say, Have a holy awe upon your minds to avoid that which is evil, and a strict care to embrace and do that which is good. The measure and standard of which knowledge and duty, is the Light of Christ in your con-

sciences, by which* you may clearly see if your deeds, and your words and thoughts too, are wrought in God or not; for they are the deeds of the mind, and for which you must be judged: I say, with this Divine light of Christ in your consciences, you may bring your thoughts, words, and works to judgment in yourselves, and have a right, true, sound, and unerring sense of your duty towards God and man. And as you come to obey this blessed light in its holy convictions, it will lead you out of the world's dark and degenerate ways and works, and bring you unto Christ's way and life, and to be of the number of his true self-denying followers; to take up your cross for his sake, who bore his for yours; and to become the children of the light, putting it on, as your holy armour; by which you may see and resist the fiery darts of Satan's temptations, and overcome him in all his assaults.

I would a little explain this principle to you: It is called Light†, because it gives man a sight of his sin. And it is also called the quickening Spirit; for so He is called, and the Lord from heaven‡, who is called, and calls himself, the

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* John iii. 20, 21. † John i. 9. iii. 19, 20, 21. and viii. 12. Eph. v. 8, 13, 14. 1 Thess. v. 5. 1 John i. 5, 6, 7 Rev. xxi. 23. ‡ 1 Cor. xv. 45, 47.

light of the world*. And why is he called the Spirit? Because he gives man spiritual life. Christ promised to send his Spirit to convince the world of their sins†: wherefore, that which convinces you and all people of their sins, is the Spirit of Christ. This is highly prized, Rom. viii. (as you may read in that great and sweet chapter), for the children of God are led by it. This reveals the things of God that appertain to man's salvation and happiness‡: it is the earnest God gives his people§. It is the great end, and benefit, and blessing of the coming of Christ, viz. the shining forth of this Light, and pouring forth of this Spirit. Yea, Christ is not received by them that resist his Light and Spirit in their hearts; nor can they have the benefit of his birth, life, death, resurrection, intercession, &c. who rebel against the Light. God sent his Son to bless us, in turning us from the evil of our ways; therefore have a care of evil, for that turns you away from God; and wherein you have done evil, do so no more. But be ye turned, my dear children, from that evil in thought, as well as in word or deed; or that will turn you from God your Creator, and Christ, whom he has given you for your Redeemer: who redeems and saves his people *from* their sins¶, not *in* their sins.

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* John viii. 12. † John xvi. 8. ‡ 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11, 12.
§ 2 Cor. v. 5. ¶ Tit. ii. xiv.

Read Acts ii. and Heb. viii. and the Christian dispensation will appear to be that of the Spirit; which sin quencheth, hardens the heart against, and bolts the door upon.

This holy Divine principle is called Grace too, Tit. ii. 11, 12: there you will see the nature and office of it, and its blessed effects upon those that were taught of it in the primitive days. And why Grace? Because it is God's love, and not our desert, his good-will, his kindness. He "so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life*." And it is this holy Son, that is declared to be "full of grace and truth," and that of his grace we "receive grace for grace†:" that is, we receive of him, (the fulness,) what measure of grace we need. And the Lord told Paul in his great trials, when ready to stagger about the sufficiency of the grace he had received to deliver him, "My grace is sufficient for thee‡." O Children, love the grace, hearken to this grace; it will teach you, it will sanctify you, it will lead you to the rest and kingdom of God; as it taught the saints of old, first, what to deny, viz. To

* John iii. 16. † John i 14, 16. ‡ 2 Cor. xii. 9.

deny "ungodliness and worldly lusts;" and then what to do, viz. To "live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world *." And He that is full of grace, is full of light, and He that is full of light is the quickening Spirit, that gives a manifestation of his Spirit to every one to profit with†; and He that is the quickening Spirit is the Truth. "I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life," said he to his poor followers ‡. And, if the Truth make you free, said he to the Jews, then are you free indeed §. And this Truth sheds abroad itself in man, and begets Truth in the inward parts; and makes false, rebellious, hypocritical man, a true man to God again. Truth in the inward parts is of great price with the Lord. And why called Truth? Because it tells man the truth of his spiritual state; it shews him his state, deals plainly with him, and sets his sins in order before him. So that, my dear Children, the Light, Spirit, Grace, and Truth, are not divers principles, but divers words or denominations given to one eternal power and heavenly principle in you, though not of you, but of God, according to the manifestation or operation thereof in the servants of God of old time: Light, to discover and give discerning; Spirit, to quicken and enliven; Grace,

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* Tit. ii. 11, 12. † 1 Cor. xii. 7. ‡ John xiv. 6.
§ John viii. 32, 36.

to wit, the love of God; Truth, because it tells man the truth of his condition, and redeems him from the errors of his ways: that as darkness, death, sin, and error, are the same, so Light, Spirit, Grace, and Truth, are the same.

This is that which is come by Christ; and a measure of this Light, Spirit, Grace, and Truth, is given to every man and woman to see their way to go by, which leads out of the vain honours, compliments, lusts, and pleasures of the world.

O my dear Children! this is the pearl of price: part with all for it; but never part with it for all the world. This is the Gospel leaven, to leaven you; that is, sanctify and season you in body, soul, and spirit, to God your heavenly Father's use and service, and your own lasting comfort. Yea, this is the Divine and incorruptible Seed of the kingdom, of which all truly regenerate men and women, Christians of Christ's making, are born. Receive it into your hearts, give it room there; let it take deep root in you, and you will be fruitful unto God in every good word and work. As you take heed to it, and the holy enlightenings and motions of it, you will have a perfect discerning of the spirit of this world, in all its appearances, in yourselves and others; the motions, temptations, and workings of it, as to pride, vanity, covetousness, revenge,

uncleanness, hypocrisy, and every evil way; you will see the world in all its shapes and features, and you will be able to judge the world by it, and the spirit of the world in all its appearances. You will see, as I have done, that there is much to deny, much to suffer, and much to do; and you will see, that there is no power or virtue but in the Light, Spirit, Grace, and Truth of Christ, to carry you through the world to God's glory, and your everlasting peace. Yea, you will see what religion is from above, and what is from below; what is of God's working, and what of man's making and forcing; also, what ministry is of his Spirit and giving, and what of man's studying, framing, and imposing. You will, I say, discern the rise, nature, tokens, and fruits of the true from the false ministry; and what worship is spiritual, and what carnal; and what honour is of God, and what that honour is which is from below, of men, yea, fallen men, that the world so generally loves, and which is spoken against in John v. 44. You will see the vain and evil communication that corrupts good manners, the snares of much company and business, and especially the danger of the friendship of this present evil world.

Having thus expressed myself to you, my dear Children, as to the things of God, his Truth and

kingdom, I refer you to his Light, Grace, Spirit, and Truth within you, and the Holy Scriptures of Truth without you, which from my youth I loved to read, and were ever blessed to me, and which I charge you to read daily; the Old Testament for history chiefly, the Psalms for meditation and devotion, the Prophets for comfort and hope, but especially the New Testament for doctrine, faith, and worship; for they were given forth by holy men of God in divers ages, as they were moved by the Holy Spirit; and are the declared and revealed mind and will of the Holy God to mankind under divers dispensations; and they are certainly able to make the man of God perfect through faith, unto salvation; being a true and clear testimony to the salvation that is of God, through Christ the second Adam, the Light of the world, the quickening Spirit, who is full of Grace and Truth; whose Light, Grace, Spirit, and Truth, bear witness to them in every sensible soul, as they frequently, plainly, and solemnly bear testimony to the Light, Spirit, Grace, and Truth, both in himself, and in and to his people, to their sanctification, justification, redemption, and consolation, and in all men to their visitation, reproof, and conviction, in their evil ways: I say, having thus expressed myself in general, I refer you, my dear Children, to the Light and Spirit of Jesus that is within you, and to the Scriptures of Truth without you.

O THAT children and people would be careful in their very early years, and as they grow up and advance in life, to mind the reproofs of instruction in their own breasts! they are known to be the way of life, Divine life to the soul.

This *something*, though they know not what it is, that checks them in secret for evil, both before and after they yield to the temptation; warning them before-hand, not to touch or taste, and afterwards condemning them if they do so, and inwardly inclining them to a life of religion and virtue; this is the very thing, dear young people, whereby God worketh in you, to will and to do; and by which he will, if you cleave to it, and work with it, enable you to work out your own salvation, with fear and trembling before him.—Despise it not, do no violence to its motions, love it, cherish it, reverence it, hearken to its pleadings with you; give up without delay to its requirings, and obey its teachings. It is God's messenger for good to thy immortal soul: its voice in thy streets, is truly the voice of the living God.—Its call is a kind invitation to thee, from the throne of Grace.

Hear it, and it will lead thee; obey it, and it will save thee from the power of sin and Satan: it will finally lead to an inheritance incorruptible in the mansions of rest, the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

Journal of JOB SCOTT, *p.* 15.

William & Samuel Graves, Printers, 66, Cheapside, London.

WILLIAM PENN's

LETTER

TO HIS

WIFE AND CHILDREN,

London:

Printed by William and Samuel Graves, Sherborne-Lane;
for the TRACT ASSOCIATION of the
SOCIETY OF FRIENDS.

1822.

No. 6. 5th Ed.

Advertisement.

The Author of the following Letter is well known as the founder of the colony of Pennsylvania; which Charles II. granted to him in consideration of debts due to his father, Admiral Penn, at the decease of the latter. On being lately republished in a life of William Penn, in two volumes, 8vo. by Thomas Clarkson, it attracted notice as a performance fraught with instructive counsel; and is now, for the convenience of those who may not possess the above work, reprinted in a separate form.

London, 1814.

W. PENN's LETTER.

MY DEAR WIFE AND CHILDREN,

MY love, which neither sea, nor land, nor death itself, can extinguish or lessen toward you, most endearedly visits you with eternal embraces, and will abide with you for ever: and may the God of my life watch over you, and bless you, and do you good in this world and for ever! Some things are upon my spirit to leave with you in your respective capacities, as I am to one a husband, and to the rest a father, if I should never see you more in this world.

My dear wife! Remember thou wast the love of my youth, and much the joy of my life, the most beloved, as well as most worthy of all my earthly comforts: and the reason of that love was more thy inward than thy outward excellencies, which yet were many. God knows, and thou knowest it, I can say it was a match of Providence's making, and God's image in us both was the first thing, and the most amiable and

engaging ornament in our eyes. Now I am to leave thee, and that without knowing whether I shall ever see thee more in this world, take my counsel into thy bosom, and let it dwell with thee in my stead while thou livest.

First: Let the fear of the Lord, and a zeal and love to his glory dwell richly in thy heart; and thou wilt watch for good over thyself, and thy dear children and family, that no rude, light, or bad thing be committed: else God will be offended, and he will repent himself of the good he intends thee and thine.

Secondly: Be diligent in meetings for worship and discipline; stir up thyself and others herein; it is thy duty and place: and let meetings be kept once a day in the family to wait upon the Lord, who has given us much time for ourselves; and, my dearest, to make thy family matters easy to thee, divide thy time and be regular: it is easy and sweet; thy retirement will afford thee to do it; as in the morning, to view the business of the house, and fix it as thou desirest, seeing all be in order; that by thy counsel all may move, and to thee render an account every evening. The time for work, for walking, for meals, may be certain, at least as near as may be: and grieve not thyself with careless servants; they will disorder thee; rather pay them, and let them go, if they will not be better by admonitions: this is best to avoid many words, which, I know, wound the soul, and offend the Lord.

Thirdly: Cast up thy income, and see what it daily amounts to; by which thou mayst be sure to have it in thy sight, and power to keep within compass: and I beseech thee to live low and sparingly, till my debts are paid, and then enlarge as thou seest

it convenient. Remember thy mother's example, when thy father's public spiritedness had worsted his estate (which is my case). I know thou lovest plain things, and art averse to the pomps of the world; a nobility natural to thee. I write not as doubtful, but to quicken thee, for my sake, to be more vigilant herein; knowing that God will bless thy care, and thy poor children, and thee for it. My mind is wrapt up in a saying of thy father's, 'I desire not riches, but to owe nothing:' and truly *that* is wealth: and more than enough to live, is a snare attended with many sorrows. I need not bid thee be humble, for thou art so; nor meek and patient, for it is much of thy natural disposition; but I pray thee be oft in retirement with the Lord, and guard against encroaching friendships. Keep them at arms end, for it is giving away our power, aye, and self too, into the possession of another; and that which might seem engaging in the beginning, may prove a yoke and burden too hard and heavy in the end. Wherefore keep dominion over thyself, and let thy children, good meetings, and friends be the pleasure of thy life.

Fourthly: And now, my dearest, let me recommend to thy care my dear children; abundantly beloved of me, as the Lord's blessing, and the sweet pledges of our mutual and endeared affection. Above all things, endeavour to breed them up in the love of virtue, and that holy plain way of it which we have lived in, that the world in no part of it get into my family. I had rather they were homely than finely bred, as to outward behaviour; yet I love sweetness mixed with gravity, and cheerfulness tempered with sobriety. Religion in the heart leads into this true civility, teaching men and women to be mild and cour-

teous in their behaviour, an accomplishment worthy indeed of praise.

Fifthly: Next, breed them up in a love one to another; tell them, it is the charge I left behind me; and that it is the way to have the love and blessing of God upon them; also, what his portion is, who hates, or calls his brother fool. Sometimes separate them, but not long and allow them to send and give each other small things, to endear one another with. Once more I say, tell them, it was my counsel they should be tender and affectionate one to another. For their learning, be liberal. Spare no cost, for by such parsimony all is lost that is saved; but let it be *useful* knowledge, such as is consistent with truth and godliness, not cherishing a vain conversation or idle mind; but ingenuity mixed with industry, is good for the body and mind too. I recommend the useful parts of mathematics, as building houses or ships, measuring, surveying, dialling, navigation; but agriculture is especially in my eye. Let my children be husbandmen and housewives; it is industrious, healthy, honest, and of good example, like Abraham and the holy Ancients, who pleased God, and obtained a good report. This leads to consider the works of God and nature, of things that are good; and diverts the mind from being taken up with the vain arts and inventions of a luxurious world. It is commendable in the princes of Germany, and the nobles of that empire, that they have all their children instructed in some useful occupation. Rather keep an ingenious person in the house to teach them, than send them to schools; too many evil impressions being commonly received there. Be sure to observe

their genius, and do not cross it as to learning. Let them not dwell too long on one thing; but let their change be agreeable, and all their diversions have some little bodily labour in them. When grown big, have most care for them; for then there are more snares both within and without. When marriageable, see that they have worthy persons in their eye, of good life, and good fame for piety and understanding. I need no wealth, but sufficiency; and be sure their love be dear, fervent, and mutual, that it may be happy for them. I choose not they should be married to earthly covetous kindred; and of cities and towns of concourse beware: the world is apt to stick close to those who have lived, and got wealth there; a country life and estate I like best for my children. I prefer a decent mansion of an hundred pounds per annum, before ten thousand pounds in London, or such like place, in a way of trade. In fine, my dear, endeavour to breed them dutiful to the Lord, and his blessed light, truth, and grace, in their hearts, who is their Creator; and his fear will grow up with them. Teach a child (says the wise man) the way thou wilt have him to walk, and when he is old, he will not forget it. Next, obedience to thee, their dear mother, and that not for wrath, but conscience sake; liberal to the poor, pitiful to the miserable, humble and kind to all. And may my God make thee a blessing, and give thee comfort in our dear children; and in age, gather thee to the joy and blessedness of the just (where no death shall separate us) for ever!

"And now, my dear children, that are the gifts and mercies of the God of your tender father, hear my counsel, and lay it up in your hearts; love it

more than treasure; and follow it and you shall be blessed here, and happy hereafter. In the first place, remember your Creator in the days of your youth. It was the glory of Israel, in the second of Jeremiah: and how did God bless Josiah, because he feared him in his youth! and so he did Jacob, Joseph, and Moses. O my dear children, remember, and fear and serve him who made you, and gave you to me and your dear mother, that you may live to him, and glorify him in your generation!

To do this in your youthful days, seek after the Lord, that you may find him; remembering his great love in creating you; that you are not beasts, plants, or stones, but that he has kept you, and given you his grace within, and substance without, and provided plentifully for you. This remember in your youth, that you may be kept from the evil of the world; for, in age, it will be harder to overcome the temptations of it.

Wherefore, my dear children, eschew the appearance of evil, and love, and cleave to that in your hearts, which shows you evil from good, and tells you when you do amiss, and reproves you for it. It is the light of Christ, that he has given you for your salvation. If you do this, and follow my counsel, God will bless you in this world, and give you an inheritance in that which shall never have an end. For the light of Jesus is of a purifying nature; it seasons those who love it and take heed to it; and never leaves such, till it has brought them to the City of God, that has foundations. O that ye may be seasoned with the gracious nature of it! Hide it in your hearts, and flee, my dear children, from all youthful lusts; the vain sports, pastimes, and

pleasure of the world: redeeming the time because the days are evil!—You are now beginning to live.—What would some give for your time? Oh! I could have lived better, were I, as you, in the flower of youth—Therefore love and fear the Lord; keep close to meetings, and delight to wait on the Lord God of your father and mother, among his despised people, as we have done; and count it your honour to be members of that Society, and heirs of that living fellowship which is enjoyed among them; for the experience of which your father's soul blesseth the Lord for ever.

Next: be obedient to your dear mother, a woman whose virtue and good name is an honour to you; for she has been exceeded by none in her time for her plainness, integrity, industry, humanity, virtue, and good understanding; qualities not usual among women of her worldly condition and quality. Therefore honour and obey her, my dear children, as your mother, and your father's love and delight! nay, love her too: for she loved your father with a deep and upright love, choosing him before all her many suitors; and tho' she be of a delicate constitution and noble spirit, yet she descended to the utmost tenderness and care for you, performing the painfullest acts of service to you in your infancy, as a mother and a nurse too. I charge you before the Lord, honour and obey, love and cherish your dear mother.

Next, betake yourselves to some honest industrious course of life, and that not of sordid covetousness, but for example, and to avoid idleness. And if you change your condition and marry, choose with the knowledge and consent of your mother if living, or of guardians, or those

who have the charge of you. Mind neither beauty nor riches, but the fear of the Lord, and a sweet and amiable disposition; such as you can love above all this world, and that may make your habitations pleasant and desirable to you.

And being married, be tender, affectionate, patient, and meek. Live in the fear of the Lord, and he will bless you and your offspring. Be sure to live within compass; borrow not, neither be beholden to any. Ruin not yourselves by kindness to others; for that exceeds the due bounds of friendship; neither will a true friend expect it. Small matters I heed not.

Let your industry and parsimony go no further than for a sufficiency for life, and to make a provision for your children, (and that in moderation,) if the Lord give you any. I charge you help the poor and needy; let the Lord have a voluntary share of your income, for the good of the poor, both in our Society and others; for we are all his creatures; remembering that 'he that giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord.'

Know well your in-comings, and your outgoings may be better regulated. Love not money, nor the world: use them only, and they will serve you: but if you love them, you serve them, which will debase your spirits, as well as offend the Lord.

Pity the distressed, and hold out a hand of help to them; it may be your case; and as you mete to others, God will mete to you again.

Be humble and gentle in your conversation, of few words, I charge you: but always pertinent when you speak, hearing out before you attempt to answer, and then speaking as if you would persade, not impose.

Affront none, neither revenge the affronts that are done to you; but forgive, and you shall be forgiven of your heavenly father.

In making friends, consider well first; and when you are fixed, be true, not wavering by reports, nor deserting in affliction, for that becomes not the good and virtuous. Watch against anger, neither speak nor act in it; for, like drunkenness, it makes a man a beast, and throws people into desperate inconveniencies.

Avoid flatterers, for they are thieves in disguise, their praise is costly, designing to get by those they bespeak; they are the worst of creatures; they lye to flatter, and flatter to cheat; and, which is worse, if you believe them, you cheat yourselves most dangerously. But the virtuous, though poor love, cherish, and prefer. Remember David, who asking the Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle, who shall dwell upon thy holy hill? answers, He that walketh uprightly, worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart; in whose eyes the vile person is contemned, but honoureth them who fear the Lord. Next, my children, be temperate in all things; in your diet, for that is physic by prevention; it keeps, nay it makes people healthy, and their generation sound. This is exclusive of the spiritual advantage it brings. Be also plain in your apparel. Keep out that lust which reigns too much over some. Let your virtues be your ornaments; remembering life is more than food, and the body than raiment. Let your furniture be simple and cheap. Avoid pride, avarice, and luxury. Read my 'No Cross no Crown'. There is Instruction!

Make your conversation with the most eminent for wisdom and piety; and shun all wicked

men as you hope for the blessing of God, and the comfort of your father's living and dying prayers. Be sure you speak no evil of any, no, not of the meanest: much less of your superiors, as, magistrates, guardians, tutors, teachers, and elders in Christ.

Be not busy bodies; meddle not with other folks matters; but when in conscience and duty prest: for it procures trouble, and is ill manners, and very unseemingly to wise men.

In your families remember Abraham, Moses, and Joshua, their integrity to the Lord; and do as you have them for your examples.

Let the fear and service of the Living God be encouraged in your houses; and that plainness, sobriety, and moderation in all things, as becometh God's chosen people; and as I advised you, my beloved children, do you counsel your's, if God should give you any, Yea, I counsel and command them, as my posterity, that they love and serve the Lord God with an upright heart; that he may bless you and yours, from Generation to Generation.

And as for you, who are likely to be concerned in the government of Pennsylvania, and my parts of East Jersey, especially the first, I do charge you, before the Lord God and his holy Angels, that you be lowly, diligent, and tender, fearing God, and loving the people, and hating covetousness. Let Justice have its impartial course, and the Law free passage. Though to your loss, protect no man against it; for you are not above the law, but the law above you. Live therefore the lives yourselves, you would have the people live, and then you have right and boldness, to punish the transgressors. Keep upon

the square, for God sees you: therefore do your duty; and be sure you see with your own eyes and hear with your own ears. Entertain no lurchers, cherish no informers for gain or revenge; use no tricks; fly to no devices to support or cover injustice; but let your hearts be upright before the Lord, trusting in him, above the contrivances of men, and none shall be able to hurt or supplant.

Oh! the Lord is a strong God, and he can do whatsoever he pleases; and though, men consider it not, it is the Lord that rules and over-rules in the Kingdoms of men, and he builds up and pulls down. I, your father, am the man that can say, He that trusts in the Lord shall not be confounded; but God, in due time, will make his enemies be at peace with him.

If you thus behave yourselves, and so become a terror to evil doers, and a praise to them that do well, God, my God, will be with you in wisdom and a sound mind, and make you blessed instruments in His hand, for the settlement of some of those desolate parts of the world, which my soul desires, above all worldly honours and riches, both for you that go and you that stay: you that govern and you that are governed; that in the end you may be gathered, with me, to the rest of God.

Finally, my children, love one another, with a true endeared love, and your dear relations on both sides; and take care to preserve tender affection in your children to each other, often marrying within themselves, so as it be without the bounds forbidden in God's law, that so they may not, like the foregetting unnatural world, grow out of kindred, and as cold as strangers: but, as becomes a truly natural and Christian stock, you, and yours

after you, may live in the pure and fervent love of God towards one another, as becometh brethren in the spiritual and natural relation.

So my God, that hath blessed me with his abundant mercies, both of this and the other and better life, be with you all, guide you by his counsel, bless you, and bring you to his eternal glory! that you may shine, my dear children, in the firmament of God's power, with the blessed spirits of the just, that celestial family, praising and admiring him, the God and Father of it for ever and ever. For there is no God like unto him: the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of the Prophets, the Apostles, and Martyrs, of Jesus, in whom I live for ever

So farewell to my thrice dearly beloved wife and children!

Yours, as God pleaseth, in that which no waters can quench, no time forget, nor distance wear away, but remains for ever.

WILLIAM PENN.

Worminghurst,
4th of Sixth Month, 1682.

W. and S. Graves, Printers,
Sherborne Lane, London.

A

CHRISTIAN EXHORTATION

TO

SAILORS,

AND

PERSONS ENGAGED

IN A

SEAFARING LIFE.

BY WILLIAM FORSTER, JUNIOR.

LONDON:
Printed by William and Samuel Graves, 66, Cheapside;
for the TRACT ASSOCIATION of the
Society of Friends.

1819.

No. 7.

" THEY that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; these see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep: for he commandeth and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof. They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths; their soul is melted because of trouble. They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit's end. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses. He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven. Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!"

Ps. cvii. 23—31.

A

CHRISTIAN EXHORTATION,

&c.

I HAVE often meditated upon the nature of a Seafaring life; and in considering the dangers and difficulties, to which many of my Fellow-creatures employed upon the seas are exposed, my heart has been warmed with strong desire, that they may be more generally acquainted with the consolations of True Religion. In this desire, I have wished to remind them of the love of our Heavenly Father; and, in a few words, to beseech them to consider, how far they are endeavouring to live in love to Him, and to walk in the way of his Commandments.

It is a very precious truth which we find recorded in the Holy Scriptures, that "God is no respecter of persons." (*Acts* x. 34.) Our almighty Creator has made of one blood all the nations of men that dwell upon the face of the earth; and in his love He makes no distinction between the rich and the poor, the learned and the unlearned;—between the inhabitants of one nation and those of another: but all are children of the same family, created with the gracious design that they

should enjoy peace with Him while here, and everlasting happiness hereafter. The great work of true religion to which I now desire to direct your attention, my dear Brethren, appears to me to consist in knowing this great and gracious Being, in loving Him, in doing his will, and living in his fear. This is the principal business of life; this would make us truly happy. It is for want of knowing and loving God, that there is so much misery and wretchedness in the world, that so many are living without peace, and as we have reason to fear, dying without hope.

It is from God that we receive all our blessings: it is He who hath clothed and fed us: his fatherly eye hath been watching over us for good. It is He who hath delivered us in danger; and it is of his mercy that our lives are lengthened out to the present day. Oh! how great is his goodness! how much do we owe to Him, from whom we have received all these favours! But He has not only provided for us in those things which concern our present outward condition: He has placed his good Spirit in our hearts, to instruct us in his holy law; and it is by this, that as a kind and tender Father, He is reproving us for our disobedience; and inviting us to forsake every wicked way, and to walk in the path of peace. It is thus that He has made himself known to the children of men in all the former generations of time; and He is in the same manner, manifesting his gracious regard to the inhabitants of the earth, at the present day.

This is the voice of his Wisdom, the invitation of Divine Love. It is the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the power of God unto salvation. In our early childhood, this Holy Spirit visits our minds, and reproves us for evil; and as we advance in life, it continues to follow us, pleading

with us, and persuading us to turn unto the Lord, and serve Him with our whole hearts. But if we resist its power, if we refuse this invitation of the love of God, and do that which we *know* to be evil, it condemns us, it brings us into sorrow, and heaviness, and distress. We are afraid of his displeasure, and instead of looking up to Him, as to a merciful and tender Father, which his obedient children can do with humble confidence, our hearts are filled with terror, and we look to Him, as to a just and righteous Judge, who will punish those that rebel against his law.

Now, do you not know something of this Divine Power? Have you not heard this voice of heavenly wisdom, and been favoured, after this manner, with the invitation of Divine Love? Consider then the goodness and mercy of God, and be entreated to receive the visitation of his Holy Spirit. Hear its reproofs, and listen to its instructions. Let it bring to your remembrance the sins of your early lives. Be willing to behold yourselves as you are seen in the sight of Almighty God, and if you feel that you have transgressed his law, and that you are sinners in his holy presence, suffer his righteous judgment, endure the fatherly correction of his powerful hand. But do not despair of his mercy and forgiveness: remember that Jesus Christ our Lord, "came into the world to save sinners," (1 *Tim.* i. 15,) to save the chief among sinners, to save them from sin, and to give them hope in the great mercy of God.

He has given Himself for us: yes, He has tasted death for every man. He died for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and that we might be purified to Him, and by Him. For He came into the World, and fulfilled all righteousness in obedience to his Father's will, not only

that he might be a perfect pattern unto us in holiness, humility, meekness, and love; but He has borne our infirmities, and victoriously endured the temptations with which we are tried, that He might manifest his tender compassion with the weakness of our nature. Now He who has done and suffered so much for poor, rebellious sinners, who was crucified by the hands of cruel men, and who is now ascended into the glory which He had with the Father, before the world began, is still waiting to receive those that seek Him; the language of his love is still the same: "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." (*John* vi. 37.) If we embrace the invitation of his love, and come unto Him, we shall find all that we want, to render us acceptable to that pure and holy Being, who is, through his beloved Son, seeking our happiness and everlasting peace.

Christ will then be our Light and our Leader. He will be our strength and our defence. Through his Holy Spirit we shall become more thoroughly instructed in the way of righteousness and peace: we shall not only be more fully convinced of the necessity of denying ourselves of much to which our evil inclinations are prone, but we shall see, that the way of the cross is a path attended with the purest joys, and most substantial consolations, of which we can possibly partake in this life. Through our Redeemer our hearts will be strengthened; and we shall be endued with holy courage to acknowledge ourselves his disciples, even in the presence of his enemies. If we thus faithfully follow Him, He will defend us in the hour of temptation, and give us the victory over the many lusts of our flesh, and the love of this present world. He will not only deliver and preserve us from that which is evil; but if we live in obedience to his good Spirit, we shall delight in the

law of God, we shall love Him with all our heart, and with all our soul, and with all our strength, and with all our mind; and we shall love our neighbours as ourselves. (*Luke* x. 27.) In every nation, and amongst all the different people we meet with in the world, we shall do unto others as we would that they should do unto us. (*Matth.* vii. 12.) We shall take no unjust advantage in our dealings, we shall not oppress our fellow-creatures, when we have it in our power;—but we shall fulfil the law of kindness unto all; loving our enemies, doing good to them that hate us, and blessing them that curse us, and praying for them that despitefully use us, and persecute us. (*Matth.* v. 44.) And in our daily conduct and deportment among men, we shall approve ourselves true disciples of the Lord Jesus, in chastity, humility, meekness, sobriety, temperance, and patience. It is thus that Christ becomes all in all to them that believe in Him, come unto Him, and obediently follow his blessed guidance. And thus shall we know Him as He is described to be "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." (*John* i. 29.) We shall rejoice in Him as *our* Redeemer, because He has saved us from our sins and settled our minds in hope of obtaining through the goodness of God, an inheritance in his glorious kingdom in the world to come.

This is pure Religion and true Christianity. It is attainable by all of every class, whatever may be their situation or condition. So that although a sea-faring life may subject those who follow it to many difficulties and discouragements, and may be attended with some temptations peculiar to itself; yet through the condescending mercy of our Heavenly Parent, the consolations of the gospel, that message of glad tidings of

mercy and redemption to poor, sinful man, which is freely offered through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, are as certainly within the reach of the Sailor and Fisherman, as of those in any other station or employment in life. He who is God of the whole earth, is also God of the great seas; all is the workmanship of his hand; his all-seeing eye beholds us every where, in all circumstances, and in every land. When we are in peril of our lives, and ready to perish with cold and hunger,—when our hearts fail us through fear, and we may think that sudden destruction is coming upon us, though we may be out of the reach of help from our fellow-men, yet He sees us, and if it please Him He will deliver us. But if in his wisdom, He suffers the continuance of all these hardships, until we even lose all hope of life, He can make us content in all our many troubles, and comfort us in the assurance, that when we leave this world, we shall have peace with Him for ever. His ear is always open to our petitions, and though we may not be able to express our wants to Him in words, yet as He searches our hearts, and knows our wants, if we ask in submission to his will, He will help us. True prayer is the language of the heart, the breathing of the soul to God; so that whether we express our wants in words, or secretly pour forth our souls in sighs and groans before Him, we have cause to hope, that our prayers will meet with his gracious regard. If we have none to give us the instruction which we feel we want, if we have no outward minister to remind us of our duty to God and our fellow-creatures, yet if we take heed to the teaching of the Spirit of Christ in our hearts, we shall never want a teacher, for that will make us wise unto salvation: it will be as a word behind us, when we turn to the right hand, or to the left, saying

"This is the way, walk ye in it." (*Isaiah* xxx. 21.) If we had the opportunity of frequently attending on the teaching of men, their help might fail us; but this will never fail us: it is in us, and it will abide with us.

Thus might the Lord Almighty be worshipped in Spirit and in Truth by the poor seaman, day by day, while he is toiling upon the deep waters. And thus would the holy religion of the blessed Jesus bring forth acceptable fruits, so that the Great Name would be praised by many of our fellow-creatures, who seem to be living in forgetfulness of God, and without concern for their latter end. They would be sober and temperate in their lives and conduct; there would be no more quarrelling or discord among them; they would speak the truth every man to his neighbour; the tongues of those who had once blasphemed the holy name of God, and cursed their fellow-creatures, would be governed by the fear of offending their Maker; and instead of cursing, and wicked wanton words, they would often speak one to another in meekness and kindness, and persuade one another in brotherly love, to join with them in serving the Lord Jesus Christ. The Holy Bible, which it is to be feared is now too much neglected by many among them, would meet with more frequent and serious perusal; and to this profitable employment we may hope that the Divine Blessing would be graciously added, by increasing their love to God, and their acquaintance with the promises of the Gospel.

Being thus preserved in the fear of the Lord, in their daily occupations on the sea, the poor mariners, when temptations assail them on shore, would be also helped to resist the devil in all his devices, to flee the wicked and deceitful company of those who in almost every sea-port, are trying

to lead them into wantonness and drunkenness, and endeavouring to spoil the youth of their innocency, and to rob them of the wages, which they have earned through so many toils and dangers.

But alas! where at the present day, shall we find greater wickedness, and more abominable vice than in some of these places, among our sailors and their companions in riotous mirth; and how are they, in foreign lands, even where the religion of Christianity is hardly known, violating the law of God's righteousness, and causing his name to be blasphemed among the heathen! Consider these things, I entreat you. Listen to the voice of God, and flee while you have opportunity to return. Time is short and uncertain to all: but to you it seems more particularly uncertain. Remember how many of your companions have been called at an unexpected hour; how many who partook with you of the same mess, perhaps but a few months ago, have found a watery grave in the mighty deep. How little do you know, but the next storm may sweep you off this stage of life, and bring you to the bar of the great Judge! Oh! then, that he that reads, may be brought to fear, and to trust in the Lord.

I would now address a few words more particularly to you, *young men*:—to you who are now healthy and strong, full of courage, and perhaps looking for many more days. Let me entreat you to remember your Creator now in the days of your youth. It is not too soon for you to seek the Lord, and to think of your latter end. Have you not already heard the voice of his Holy Spirit? has it not reproved and pleaded with you, and do you not now feel the power of its convictions? I would hope that the minds of many of you are not so far hardened, that you can sin against

God without remorse. Are not your ears shocked when you hear the name of the great Preserver of men openly profaned; and do not your tender hearts now shudder at what offends your eyes almost every day? If this be your happy case, Oh! beware that no man rob you of this heavenly treasure,—the fear of God. Do not forget that you are constantly under the notice of our Almighty Parent; that He hears your words, and sees your actions, by night as well as by day; on the sea, as well as by land; and that although much may be concealed from man, yet nothing can be hid from his all-seeing eye.

Let not any example among your elder associates, or even superiors, induce you to transgress the law of the Lord. Turn a deaf ear to their enticements, and look unto God, and He will help you to bear their revilings and reproach without anger or impatience. He will give you that sweet peace, which will make your hearts joyful, in the midst of all the sufferings you can endure from wicked men, for his name's sake. Thus, dear young people, would you be preserved in the fear and love of God, in a life of many temptations, and find Him a strong hold in every time of trouble. He would be with you in all your many difficulties and dangers, and if you were called from this world in early life, you might hope, that you would be permitted to enter into his kingdom of rest and peace.

FINIS.

W. & S. Graves, Printers,
66, Cheapside, London.

THE

ANCIENT CHRISTIANS' Principle,

OR

RULE OF LIFE,

REVIVED, OR SET FORTH:

WITH A

DESCRIPTION OF TRUE GODLINESS,

&c.

EXTRACTED FROM THE WRITINGS OF

HUGH TURFORD.

LONDON:
Printed by William and Samuel Graves, 66, Cheapside;
for the TRACT ASSOCIATION of the
SOCIETY OF FRIENDS.

1819.

No. 8

Advertisement.

THE following Extracts from the writings of HUGH TURFORD, *(an Author in the fore-part of the last century,) are chiefly taken from a tract of which the subject is a text in the Epistle to Titus, and some passages in the 5th, 6th, and 7th Chapters of Matthew; but with a few additions interspersed, from another small treatise of the Author's, entitled "The Grounds of a Holy Life." These tracts, generally printed together, have had many editions. That which bears the date of* 1802, *and which has been principally used in preparing the following pages for the press, is the Seventeenth. An abstract of the first-mentioned piece, with a title similar to that prefixed to this selection, has also been several times printed.*

The present publication is (to adopt, with a slight change, the words of a former preface) recommended to the serious perusal of the professors of Christianity

of every denomination; who may be assisted by it in discovering whether they are coming up in the vital and essential part of true religion, or too much resting in a mere profession of Godliness: a point of the utmost importance for all to be ascertained of; as without the former, no profession will avail to the cleansing of the soul from sin, and preparing it for an inheritance in that kingdom, into which all, doubtless, must desire at last to obtain an admission.

THE

ANCIENT CHRISTIANS' PRINCIPLE,

&c.

PAUL, an apostle of Jesus Christ, writing to Titus, had this saying, "The grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men; teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world."

From which weighty saying, these following questions arise:

QUEST. I. What is the grace of God?

ANSW. The grace of God that bringeth salvation, is no less than a Divine inspiration, the gift of God to the sons and daughters of men. It is, under the gospel administration, the fulfilling of that covenant which God, by the mouth of his prophet Jeremiah, promised to make with the house of Jacob; which was, that he would write his law in their hearts, and put it in their inward parts.

For as God made man in the beginning, hum-

ble, lowly, meek, merciful, pure, peaceable, just, and faithful; *so* he would have all men to be. But forasmuch as nothing less than the good Spirit of God, in the inward parts of man, can reduce any of us to such a qualification [or state], God hath given to every man a measure thereof, to enlighten his understanding, and to guide him in the path of life and salvation; and this measure, being the free gift of God, is, by the apostle in the text, and in many other places of scripture, called Grace.

In our present age, light within, a law within, Spirit within, Christ within, is the scoffing of some, and little regarded by many; but I must tell them, they scoff and slight the chiefest treasure that ever the soul of any man was possessed of: they slight the talent that God hath given to every man to improve, in order to our rising from our fall, and [coming] to live under the government of the eternal Spirit.

The converted heathens* walked by this rule: they took the eternal Spirit of Christ in themselves for their guide; they confided therein, and became followers thereof; and that brought them to be a holy nation, and a peculiar people. And we should be the same, did we turn to this eternal Spirit in our own hearts, and order our conversation according to the leadings and guidings thereof.

We cannot conclude that the kingdom of Christ, that then appeared in power, did (as the sun in the firmament sometimes doth) show itself in a morning, to be no more seen all day: for the

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* [The author is speaking of the early converts from paganism to Christianity.]

kingdom of Christ is an everlasting kingdom, and the new covenant that was made with the house of Jacob, an everlasting covenant. Neither may we conclude that God hath withdrawn himself from the children of men: for he never forsakes us, unless we first forsake him.

Why [then] are not we, who are called Christians, grown to the stature of them that were born heathens, and brought up in blindness and ignorance? Why are not we sanctified, and made a holy people, as well as they? Why are not our bodies cleansed, and made an habitation for the eternal Spirit, as theirs were? Why is not our conversation in heaven, or at least more heavenly than it is?—If we would be as the primitive Christians were, we must begin where they did; we must turn to the light of righteousness in our own hearts, and walk in that light until we become children of the light.

Quest. II. Where doth the grace of God that bringeth salvation, appear?

Answ. The great God, in his infinite wisdom and everlasting love, hath placed his royal seed and plant of renown in the hearts of the sons and daughters of men: there the grace of God that bringeth salvation, may be found: there, until it come to be veiled by clouds of iniquity, it shows itself a witness against all unrighteousness and ungodliness.

As every evil motion and temptation that leads to sin, appears within; so the grace of God that is given to men, to save from sin, appears also within.

There is not a man born into the world, if he has lived to commit sin, but hath felt and known in himself rebukes for sin; and these rebukes are

the appearances of grace, and called in Scripture "light," and "true light;" for it manifests every work of darkness: it shows us both when and wherein we have done amiss; and this it hath done in all ages.

God hath not in any age left himself without a witness in the hearts of men, to declare his righteousness, truth, and faithfulness. But there is as much difference between the appearance of grace, and the power of grace to salvation; the light of righteousness, and that fulness which enables us to lead a life of righteousness; as between a seed that is sown, and the herb when it is come to full growth: but the one leads to the other; and it is he that attains to the fulness of grace, that comes to lead a sober, righteous, godly life in this present world.

Every man hath, as I may say, life and salvation before him, death and destruction behind him; he hath also a good Spirit to conduct him in the way of life and salvation, and an evil spirit waits to lead him in paths of death and destruction. The preaching of the gospel was, and ought still to be, for the opening of the eyes of those that are blind, to see the working of these two spirits in themselves, and the leadings thereof, that they might turn from the evil, and become followers of that which is good: that He, whose right it is, might come to have the rule in them and over them.

And certain I am, many may be found that [would confess they] have some sight, some sense, and some feeling of the eternal Spirit of Jesus: that they have the knowledge of something in themselves that calls for just weights and an equal balance, for doing unto all men as they would be done by, for truth in their words, and

faithfulness in their promises. Did they keep to this, they would follow a right guide, and the seed of grace would grow; truth and faithfulness would grow; knowledge, temperance, patience, brotherly-kindness, and charity, would grow; and we should find in ourselves, that an entrance into the kingdom of Christ would be abundantly ministered.

The proud, the covetous, the envious, and other ungodly persons, may, for a time, and a long time, have the appearances [or visitations] of grace; they may have rebukes for sin; but if by such rebukes they do not learn righteousness, they grow not in grace, neither doth grace grow in them. All such hide their talent, and, in time, for want of improvement, [may] come to have it quite taken from them.

Quest. III. If the grace of God appears unto all, and if there is a sufficiency therein to make them godly, how comes it to pass that there are so many ungodly.

Answ. As the grace of God that bringeth salvation, appears unto all men, so motions of sin that lead to destruction, appear unto all men; and the work of the devil is to make forbidden things appear desirable, the world and the vanities thereof to be full of pleasantness. And as our affections come to be taken therewith, as we make the world our delight, and pursue after it, we depart from God; and though grace may make many appearances, though the good Spirit of God may long strive with us, though we have in ourselves many checks and rebukes, and are thereby made sensible that our ways and our doings displease God, yet are we prone to persevere

therein; and through a continued perseverance, sin grows and comes to have dominion over us.

QUEST. IV. What manner of salvation doth the grace of God bring?

ANSW. As the appearances of grace are rebukes for sin, so the salvation that grace brings, is a saving *from sin.*

If grace teacheth men to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, grace saves good men *from sin* in this present world.

We read of an angel that appeared to Joseph, saying, "Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Ghost; and she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS, for he shall *save* his people *from their sins.*"

Nothing defaceth the image of God in man but sin; nor can any thing recover that image again, but our being saved from sin.

Saving from sin on this side the grave, may, to such as are strangers to God's salvation, seem an incredible thing; but were they so well acquainted with the power of grace, as too many are with the strength of sin, they would say, 'Christ's yoke is easy.'

I grant, that the shining of an inward light, which is the first manifestation of Christ to the sons and daughters of men, seems at first small and powerless; and so do our first motions to sin: but follow such sinful motions as far as they will lead, and we shall find them powerful enough. May not many be found at this day, even amongst us who are called Christians, so captivated under the power of sin, that a bond-slave who is held in chains of iron, can more easily

break his bonds, arise, depart, and return unto his native country, than they can cease from iniquity, rise from their fall, and lead a sober, righteous, godly life? And if the seed of sin comes, by our following the motions thereof, to have such power over us, why may not the seed of grace, if we return thereunto, and become followers thereof, have as much?

Undoubtedly John, who had travelled "from death unto life," and was an eye-witness of things as they were in the beginning, felt in himself such a power when he said, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin." 1 John, iii. 9. And many living witnesses may be found at this day, who can say, from a sensible experience, That where this righteous seed is risen and comes to have dominion, it is so powerful and restraining, that they cannot be unjust in their dealings, nor unfaithful in their promises; they cannot tell an untruth, though ever so much to their outward advantage; they cannot be intemperate, wasting the good creatures that God hath given for their nourishment, by excessive eating and drinking; they cannot oppress the poor, the widow, and fatherless, nor take by violence that which they have no right unto. The small seed in them is become the tallest of herbs, and hath as much power over them, as sin hath over those who dwell therein.

These are, as the Colossians were, delivered from the power of darkness; these have, as the Philippians had, their conversation in heaven; these glorify God in their lives, and so answer the end of their creation.

By grace the ear of a man is shut from hearkening to fables and evil reports; his eye is turned

aside from gazing upon vanity; his tongue is not suffered to curse, swear, lie, or to be employed in any idle communication; his hand is limited from taking bribes to pervert justice, and from taking by violence, or otherwise, any thing that is not his own; his feet are restrained from going with the drunkard to excess, or with a lewd woman to the chamber of wantonness, or with rude persons to rioting, revelling, or any other rude exercise. By this dominion, that grace comes to have over us, the Lord saves his people from their sins. As we live in subjection to this power, we are servants to another Prince: sin and Satan have lost their dominion over us. This is God's salvation; by this we come to "live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world."

Quest. V. Whom did the apostle mean, when he said, "Teaching us:" was it the world in general, or only some particulars?

Answ. Grace appears unto *all* men: every one that is born into the world hath a light in his soul, that shows him the motions of sin, and rebukes him when and as oft as he yields thereunto.

Quest. VI. We must confess that we have known inward rebukes for sin; we have been checked, reproved, and convicted in ourselves after we have done amiss; but we have not found any thing in and of ourselves, when strong motions and temptations have arisen in our minds, to restrain us from doing amiss; and, to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts in our own strength, seems too hard for any mortal. What can we do in such a case?

Answ. Could man, in his own strength, deliver his soul from under the power of sin and Satan,

return unto God, and lead a sober, righteous, godly life in this present world, there would have been no need of a Redeemer, no occasion for a Saviour, no use of a quickening Spirit, to give life to our souls, no necessity of God's writing his law in our hearts, for a rule to guide our steps by; no want of a light in our souls to show us where the devil spreads his net, casts his bait, lays his gin, and displays his false colours: but man can no more deliver his soul from the power of sin and Satan without the help of the Lord, than Israel, when they were in Egypt, could go free from the servitude of Pharaoh without his help; therefore grace appears unto all men for their aid. And though the appearance of grace may seem but small aid to set our souls free from the servitude of sin and Satan, and to conduct us in the way of life and salvation; it is not smaller than Israel's aid was, to bring them from under the servitude of Pharaoh, and conduct them to the promised land.

Israel's aid was but two aged men, (the younger of them being about eighty years old,) having no weapons but a rod in one of their hands; yet by this small means, God being with them, they brought from under the power and servitude of Pharaoh six hundred thousand men, besides women and children: and grace, being a Divine inspiration, is aid enough to bring six hundred thousand millions from under the servitude of sin and power of Satan, did men but confide therein, and give themselves up to be guided thereby.

Inward rebukes, if we have regard thereunto, beget a fear; and as "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," so it is the beginning of a reformation of our lives.

If I am checked in myself for making a lie,

and have regard to that which checked me, I shall be afraid of making another; or, if I find in myself rebukes for not keeping my promise, or for doing any thing amiss, and have regard to such rebukes, I shall be afraid to do the like, lest the next rebukes be sharper; and as this holy fear abides in us, we come to deny ungodliness, and in denying ungodliness we learn righteousness: but such as find in themselves rebukes for sin, and have no regard thereunto, are no scholars in the school of grace.

If one plague will not make Pharaoh willing to let Israel go, he shall have another, and another, until he be willing; and if one rebuke will not make us willing to part with a beloved sin, we shall have another, yea, trouble and terror.

Paul knew terror before he came to find peace with God, and peace in his own conscience; he was acquainted with judgment, before he came to obtain victory. Nothing hath power to break the bonds of captivity, and set us free from the law of sin and death, but the law of the Spirit of life in our own hearts.

And if any lordly sin hath got dominion over us, I shall not say, as one formerly said, "Fight not with small or great, save only with the king of Israel;" but rather, when violent motions arise, *Stand still*, and the Lord will fight for us; for as our hearts come to be possessed with grace, if the enemy should come in as a flood, the Spirit of the Lord, being in our inward parts, will lift up a standard against him.

Quest. VII. What may truly and properly be called a sober, righteous, godly life?

Answ. A sober life, many may, in some mea-

sure, be acquainted with; but a righteous, godly life is [too] rarely considered.

That devotion which consists in hearing sermons, reading good books, performing family duties, &c. hath been accounted godliness, and the practitioners thereof righteous people.

These things are not to be discommended, where they are done in sincerity; but these are not the true character of righteousness and godliness.

This [or] more might be found amongst the Scribes and Pharisees, yet Jesus told his disciples, that 'Except their righteousness exceeded the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, they should in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.'

And who are there amongst us, that are called Christians, but one day in seven will be in the exercise of something that is called godliness, though they have not learned to deny ungodliness? And such as have not learned to deny ungodliness, are far from such a righteous, godly life, as the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ teacheth all its followers.

One way to know what is righteous and godly, is to consider what is unrighteous and ungodly, for the one is opposite to the other, as light to darkness: and these things that follow, most will acknowledge to be unrighteous and ungodly; namely, drunkenness, whoredom, theft, envy, hatred, bloodshed, swearing, cursing, lying, extortion, fraud, double-dealing, tale-bearing, and whispering (which is the seed of strife): all these things are unrighteous, and pride, above many evils, most ungodly.

These are not fruits proceeding from the good Spirit of God, but from the evil spirit of this

world; not issues of life, but streams that flow from a corrupt spring; these come not from the teaching of grace in our hearts, but from evil motions that arise in our minds; these make us sinners before the Lord; and as long as we live in the practice of any of them, we shall not be righteous in his sight. These are infirmities of the soul, that millions of money have been given to physicians to cure, but behold, health hath not been by them restored—these are weeds that thousands have been hired to pluck up, but who to this day have not made clean gardens, nor ever will by all the art they have. Christ is the Physician of souls: none can take away the sins of the world, but he alone.

Whosoever thinks to attain to a righteous, godly life, but by the teachings of grace in his own heart, deceiveth his own soul.

Men may lop, or hinder the growth of many branches of iniquity that appear outwardly, but cannot take away the cause which is within; and until the cause is removed, there can be no thorough cure.

"Walk in the Spirit," said Paul, "and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh." (Gal. v. 16.) *That* is the only remedy, *that* is the soul-healing salve: and what is the walking in the Spirit, but following the leadings of grace in our own hearts? Grace, as it comes to have the rule over us, brings down all exalted thoughts, abaseth pride, shuts out covetousness, gives no place unto wrath, reduceth us to a cool, quiet frame of spirit, in which frame we can bear and suffer. Grace will not suffer us to do any unjust thing, nor allow us to speak an ill word, much less to be drunk, steal, or commit whoredom, or any such abominable vices; for it is the promised Spirit of truth that leads

into all truth, leads out of all error, and so brings salvation indeed.

No man can lead a righteous life, till a right spirit comes to have the whole possession of his heart; for from the good treasures of the heart proceeds all good living; for that is the guide, and this guide being [of] a Divine nature, makes us to be heavenly-minded.

As God in his unlimited love to mankind, "maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust;" so he that hath good-will to all, which proceeds out of the heart, when the good Spirit of God comes to make its abode there, will not wrong any, oppress any, show violence to any, or speak evil of any, but be ready to serve all men in love and faithfulness.

And since this reformation is only and alone by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, give me leave to say with the prophet, (Isa. lv. 1.) "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters," and drink; every one that hath a desire in his soul after righteousness, turn in to the grace of God in his own heart. The water that the prophet invited all thirsty souls unto, is no other than that which Christ giveth; and whosoever drinketh thereof thirsteth no more, but hath, (as many at this day can witness,) a well in himself, not only issuing, but flowing up to eternal life.

The grace of God is a free gift, without money, and without price; nothing is required on man's part, but to hearken thereunto, and take counsel therefrom: "Hear," said the prophet, "and your soul shall live."

Adam, hearkening to evil motions, died unto righteousness, and so do all ungodly men; but he that hearkens to the voice of grace, lives unto

righteousness, and from the flowings of that spring that he hath in himself, leads a sober, righteous, godly life in this present world.

Hearing and reading, at the best, tend to instruct us in what we ought to do; but godliness is doing what grace teacheth.

QUEST. VIII. Were not the Scriptures written for our learning, and are not they a sufficient rule of righteousness?

ANSW. The Scriptures are a rule; but who can walk by that rule, unless he is inspired with the good Spirit of God? The Christian's rule of righteousness is Christ's direction. Let us, who say the Scripture is our rule, examine our abilities to walk by our rule. Are we lights to the world? Do our good works glorify God, or shame our Christian profession?

If ever we think to walk by scripture rules, if ever we intend to keep our Lord's command, and if we would lead a righteous, godly life in this present world, we must turn in to the grace of God in our own hearts, for that gives us power to keep to our rule.

OBJ. But some may say, Our dependence for life and salvation is not on works of righteousness, but on faith: we believe, and therefore hope to be saved.

ANSW. I know that is most men's dependence; and faith we all think we have: but is it a faith that purifies the heart, and makes our bodies fit temples for the Holy Ghost?

Paul put the Corinthians on an examination of themselves, on a trial and proof of their faith, and it would not be amiss, if all that account themselves believers, did prove their faith by the same touchstone: "Know ye not," said Paul, "your own

selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" (2 Cor. xiii. 5.) This is life eternal, not only to hear of a God and a Saviour, but to know him; to feel the power of God, and to be witnesses of Christ's salvation.

Faith and works of righteousness go together: he that hath the one hath both, and grace is the spring from whence both proceed.

A Description of true Godliness: or, A Trial of our Christianity.

THE life and nature of Christ, all true Christians, who have the Spirit of Christ, may find in themselves; and others may have some sense thereof by reading and well considering the contents of the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters of Matthew, where it is said, that Jesus "seeing the multitudes, went up into a mountain, and when he was sat, his disciples came unto him, and he opened his mouth and taught them." What he taught his disciples then, he teacheth all true Christians now: though he ascended, the Holy Spirit that dwelt in him descended, and did then, doth now, and to the end of the world will, tabernacle with all the Lord's redeemed, to be their Teacher; and as many as walk after this Spirit, are taught of Christ, and walk in his footsteps; for as no vine beareth one kind of grape, and the branches another, so all the members of Christ answer the life of Christ in their conversation: they are humble, lowly, meek, merciful, patient, peaceable, just, upright, honest, and faithful. A Christian is not known by his words or his devotion; but by his works, his nature, his life, and his conversation.

I shall not insist on all the particulars contained in the fore-mentioned chapters, but chiefly on the five following exhortations or commands of our Lord.

The true trial of [our] Christianity is to be found in the life and nature of Christ. If the Spirit of Christ hath the rule in us, these following fruits will be brought forth by us:

First. In all our communication, our yea will be yea, and our nay, nay: the word that goeth out of our lips will be sure.

He that is a Christian indeed hath no necessity in himself, nor need to be urged by others, to bind his soul with an oath to perform his word; for the law of the Spirit of life in his own heart constrains him so to do.

Christians in their communications weigh their words, before they utter them, with their capacities to perform them; knowing that a promise cannot be broken without violating the righteous law of God in their own hearts. Whenever such violence is done, terror ensues; and this makes good men, who live under the government of Christ, dread much more to break their words, than others do to forfeit their bonds. This holy dread makes our yea to be yea, and our nay to be nay; this makes us cautious in our promises, and careful in our performances. The exhortation may be read in scripture, but the binding tie must be known in our own hearts. All that have the scripture have this rule: but, unless we have a principle of life in ourselves, we cannot walk by this rule; and we must not only have such a principle, but we must also improve it by a continued practice, before it comes to be our life, our centre, and our nature. Till then we may say, 'These things we *should* do;' but cannot say, 'These things we *do*;' and so witness against ourselves, that, though we have the scriptures,

we walk not according to the scriptures; though we have the words of Christ, we are not in the life and nature of Christ; our yea is not yea, and our nay, nay, in our communication; our words and our promises are not steadfast and sure.

A second exhortation or command of our Lord was this, "Resist not evil;" and this was not only his doctrine, but his life and nature, as we may plentifully read in scripture. Though he met with revilings, reproaches, buffetings, and cruel usage, we do not find that he was once moved thereby, much less that ever he resisted; but gave his face to the smiter, and his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; and when he was led as a lamb to the slaughter, 'he was as a sheep dumb before the shearer; he opened not his mouth.'

Now the fruits of the Spirit, in the Head and members, are one in nature; for, as Christ was humble, lowly, meek, patient, peaceable, under all his sufferings, so are Christians, if Christians indeed: they render not evil for evil, they desire not an eye for an eye, nor a tooth for a tooth; revenge of any kind is far from them; but as patience and forbearance was the life and nature of Christ, so it is the life and nature of all Christians, as they grow in grace.

And by this also, professors of Christianity may prove themselves, whether they are Christians indeed; for it is the deed that manifesteth all things: bad men may have good words; forms may be imitated, but the patience, the meekness, the forbearance that dwelt in Christ, and may be found [in degree] in all true Christians, cannot be imitated.

A third exhortation or command of Christ was this, " Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you."

This also was not only the doctrine, but the life and nature of Christ; and, as it is the life and nature of Christ, so it is the life and nature of Christians, who are thoroughly leavened with the Spirit of Christ.

No man, having the Spirit of Jesus and living under the government thereof, can hate the person of any man; for by creation we are all the workmanship of God's hands; and all true Christians know that enmity, hatred, cursing, spite, and persecution, proceed not from men, as they are the Lord's creation, but as they have lost this image, and thereby become emptied of good, and filled with all evil: for, as an evil spirit comes to have the rule over us, evil fruits will be brought forth by us.

Could we but see ourselves, did we but observe our own natures, with the fruits we bring forth in our lives, we might easily judge of ourselves whether we were converts or not; whether the Spirit of Christ, or the spirit of this world, had the rule in us and over us; for the course of our lives, especially in times of trial, declares who are led by the meek spirit of Jesus, and who are not; who are leavened with the leaven of righteousness, and who are not; who lead a sober, upright, godly life, and who do not: it is not our words, but our conversation [or lives] that manifest what spirit hath the rule in us and over us.

For until, by conversion, our natures come to

be changed, we cannot love enemies, having as much enmity against them as they have against us; we cannot bless them, we cannot pray for them, we shall be forward to do them hurt, but far from doing them good.

Come, professors of Christianity, lay aside your forms that you have long contended about; measure yourselves by this line, try yourselves by this touchstone; are you reduced to such a frame of spirit as to "love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you?"—This is a true character of Christianity.

A fourth branch of the life, nature, and doctrine of Christ was manifested in these words, 'Take no thought* for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on; but seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness."

As many as have found the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and are come to live under the rule and government of a right spirit, have the mind of Christ: though they live in the world, their thoughts run not out after the world. A true Christian is diligent in his calling, moderate in his expenses, content in his state; takes but little thought what he shall eat, or what he shall drink, or wherewithal he shall be clothed; he delights in justice, equity, truth, and faithfulness, and his thoughts are exercised therein, and resting on God's providence, his honest endeavours are attended with a blessing.

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* [Rather, *Be not anxious.* This is a more correct translation.]

Ungodly men seek the world first, I may say, first and last; the riches of the world, the honour of the world, the pleasures of the world, and the praise of the world; 'What they shall eat, or what they shall drink,' to please their appetites; 'What they shall put on,' to be accounted great in the world, and to have the pre-eminence above and before their fellow-creatures: their thoughts run far more, how they shall be conformable to the fashions of the world, than how they shall be conformable to the life, nature, and doctrine of Christ.

This is the natural state of the sons and daughters of men, whilst they continue in a state of degeneracy, aliens to the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to that covenant of promise that the Lord made with the house of Jacob. And to a better state none can come, but by seeking and finding the kingdom of God and his righteousness, or the rule and government of Christ, by his eternal Spirit in their own hearts. There the seed is sown; there the leaven is laid; there the pearl of great price is found, but not without digging deep: for whilst vice is uppermost, virtue is lowermost; whilst sin reigns, the power [or dominion] of grace is not felt; the bringing down of the one is the exaltation of the other. There must be a death unto sin, before there can be a new birth unto righteousness; and there must be a new birth unto righteousness, and a growth in righteousness, before we can centre in that content, as to 'take no thought what we shall eat, what we shall drink, or wherewithal we shall be clothed.' And so it is every man's principal concern, first to seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness; first, to know the rule and govern-

ment of a right spirit in himself; for this makes him capable of leading a Christian life, and of performing Christian duties both to God and man.

The fifth and last branch of the life, nature, and doctrine of Christ, that I shall here insist upon, is this: "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets."

This doing is accounted by many zealous professors of Christianity, in our present age, a moral righteousness, and so but a small part, or rather no part, of true godliness; but, rightly considered, all actual righteousness, if it proceeds from a right spirit, is in itself the true righteousness of faith.

Were the understandings of all who are called Christians enlightened to see themselves as they are, to prove themselves by this Christian rule, weigh themselves in this equal balance, the following sorts of men and women, with many others, would no more pass for true Christians:

As first, all who in suits of law, by perverting justice, or other subtle contrivances, possess themselves of houses, lands, or goods, that they have no right unto.

Secondly, all such as by violent robbing, or private stealing, take that which is not their own.

Thirdly, all such as detain the wages of the hireling, or grind the poor, by beating down the value of their labour till they cannot live thereby.

Fourthly, all such as in trade or dealing use light weights, short measure, or any other kind of deceit.

Fifthly, all such as either give or take bribes.

Sixthly, all such as take wages to serve, and are not faithful to their trust.

Seventhly, all such as make contracts, and perform not the same; or engage themselves by promises, and have no regard to their word.

Eighthly, all such as by evil reports, whisperings, or backbitings, sow the seeds of strife, create prejudice, or quench charity.

None of these abide in the doctrine of Christ, none of these do as they would be done unto; though they bear a Christian name, they are strangers to a Christian life.

[To conclude,] By what way may the proud become humble, the wild become sober, the covetous become content, the fraudulent become just, the intemperate become moderate, the incontinent become chaste, the unfaithful become faithful? I know many will say, By hearing good ministers, reading good books, and conferring with good men. But these things have been tried, and that for several years, by many, yet no such change hath been thereby wrought.

By hearing good ministers, reading good books, and conferring with good men, we may be convicted, but not thoroughly converted: for as virtue hath a spring, so vice hath a root that [mere] words will not reach. The strength of sin is the growth of that seed which the wicked one hath sown in the inward parts of the sons and daughters of men; and forasmuch as the cause is within, it is impossible it should be wholly removed by things without: as the cause is within, so the cure must be within, by mortifying the body of sin, or bringing down the strength thereof; which is thus effected:

There is no unrighteous thing done, but there is an inward motion before there is any outward action; and, by that light which enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world, if our eyes are inward, we may see those motions; and the way to mortify the body of sin, is to deny and turn from every such motion in the rising thereof; for in their rising they are weak and powerless, and may be easily turned back. If we do not suppress vice in the risings thereof, it will continue our lord; but by every such denial, we bring down that which would arise and reign in us and over us, whether it be pride, covetousness, envy, falsehood, or any other vice whatever: for the more denials are given to vice, the fewer assaults it will make; the stronger the opposition, the weaker the attempt. As yielding gives vice ground to grow from a seed to a body, denials bring it down from a body to a seed; so that though something thereof may abide in us, it doth not reign over us.

The axe is never laid to the root of the tree till a reformation begins within; the life of righteousness stands [or has its rise] in the mortification of sin, which is an inward work. The spirit of this world must be brought down, before the Spirit of the Lord can be exalted in us.

And as they that live after the flesh, have less life, less light, less grace, less fear; so such as walk after the Spirit, doing such things as are upright, honest, and of good report, from a principle in their own hearts, find an increase: they come to have more life, more light, more grace, more fear of offending God, or their neighbour; and this increase is a living unto righteousness. As the one goes further from, so the other draws nearer to, the kingdom of heaven.

Now a talent is not improved by lying hid in a napkin; if we would have more grace, we must exercise the measure we have attained unto: we must live in the continual practice of right things; we must keep in lowliness, meekness, temperance, patience, and other virtues; we must be just in our dealings, as well in the smallest concern, as in those which are more weighty; for a small matter turns the balance, and if that small matter be wanting, things are not just, we do not as we would be done by.

And this just dealing, as righteousness comes to reign, will be no hard thing, for as we accustom ourselves thereunto, it will be uppermost; it will be as a diligent handmaid, ready to offer her service; and every act of righteousness performed in a right spirit, hath its reward, which is not only an answer of peace, but joy in the Holy Ghost.

The way of life is the way of pleasantness, all her paths are peace. At the beginning of our journey, it will seem a strait and narrow way; but after we have travelled on a while, we shall run therein with great delight. For the kingdom of heaven, or Christ's government by his eternal Spirit in the hearts of his people, doth not consist of righteousness alone: the righteousness that proceeds from a right spirit, is accompanied with peace and joy. As ill-doing is attended with trouble and sorrow, well-doing is attended with peace and joy. All the pleasures of wickedness, that the whole world affords, are not to be compared to the joys of a righteous life. Every evil motion we deny, in obedience unto Christ, affordeth a superior joy to that which a warrior hath in battle, when his enemy fleeth before him.

I cannot recommend myself, or any other, to any better way for the reforming of our lives, than to turn in our eye to the gift of God in ourselves, that by his candle [or light] we may see the risings of vice, and so deny it: that the contrary, which is grace and truth, may rise and reign in us; for that is our help, that is our strength, and that is our defence.

Many have been awakened from the sleep of sin, and have had in themselves a true hunger and thirst after righteousness, who being awakened by an outward ministry, from *that* expected to have their hunger and thirst satisfied: but "It is the Spirit that quickeneth." What can satisfy a soul that thirsteth after righteousness, but that which is in very truth the spring of righteousness? It is in ourselves the well is to be found, that whosoever drinketh of shall never thirst; *there* is the spring that floweth up unto everlasting life.

As the kingdom of heaven stands not in words, but in power; so it is not words, but the power of God that can mortify the deeds of the body, change our nature, and make us new creatures.

Should we enter into reasoning with any motions of sin, it is much if we are not overcome thereby, for it is the nature of sin, not to turn back at a small denial, especially if it be a sin that hath prevailed over us before; but in turning therefrom we give it the repulse: if it be not hearkened unto, it goes back.

And what can show us the rising of evil motions? preachers cannot; books cannot; nothing that is without can effectually show us what is within: it must be an inward light; it must be the eternal Spirit, that was in the beginning given unto man for an Instructor.

As the seed of sin grows and waxeth strong in us by our yielding to evil motions, so the seed of grace grows and waxeth strong in us by the denying of evil motions. As the old man is put off, the new man is put on; as vice is denied, virtue is embraced; and this new man makes us new creatures: that which is created after God renews in us the image of God; and bearing that image in holiness and righteousness, our conversation will declare us to be Christians indeed.

But if this old man with his deeds of darkness be not put off, the new man that is created after God's image in righteousness and true holiness, will not be put on; and though we have been awakened unto righteousness, we shall fall asleep again, some in one form and some in another, feeding on words without any sense of power or life; and this second sleep appears to be a dead sleep; for that though we may hear much spoken against pride, covetousness, envy, &c. we are not so much as touched therewith, but live in the open show thereof.

Did the sons and daughters of men who are called Christians, make it their concern to be Christians indeed, by mortifying in themselves the spirit of this world, which is the origin of all vice, they would be not only a happy, but a lovely people; for by mortifying the body of sin, oppression would cease, all wrongs and injuries would be at an end; love would spring both to God and man; grace would grow; humility, meekness, moderation, and all other virtues, would show themselves. They would be another manner of people in their conversation; their words and their works would be just, upright, and honest; they would confide in one another without any scruple or doubt.—What is more lovely than to be at all times, and

on all occasions, just, upright, honest, and faithful, doing to all men, in all things whatsoever, even as we would that they should do unto us! Living under the rule and government of a right spirit qualifies us for performing every Christian duty: 'We shall love the Lord our God with all our hearts, and our neighbours as ourselves;' which is the sum of all godliness, and the true character of Christianity.

FINIS.

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RELIGIOUS DUTIES,

CONSISTING CHIEFLY OF

EXTRACTS

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THE following Chapters are taken from "The DUTIES *of* RELIGION *and* MORALITY, *as in- "culcated in the* HOLY SCRIPTURES, *with preliminary "and occasional Observations, by* HENRY TUKE." *The little volume from which, with the permission of the Author, this selection is made, was published "to promote sincere and solid piety, with sound and "pure morality; and at the same time to show how "forcibly these most interesting objects are inculcated "in the writings which are justly called the Holy "Scriptures."*

Whilst an attentive perusal of the following pages on the indispensable obligations of man to his Creator, is affectionately recommended to the Reader, the Editors wish likewise to acknowledge their firm belief in the excellence of that morality which is also inculcated in the Bible. In it are to be found precepts suited to every station and condition in life; precepts which will, where the love of God, and obedience to the Spirit of his Son prevail in the heart, produce peace on earth, and good-will towards men.

RELIGIOUS DUTIES.

CHAP. I.

On Faith and Hope in God.

THE first duty which we owe to the Divine Being, is Faith; or, a belief in the existence of God, in his power, and in his goodness. It is called Faith, because these great and important truths do not admit of that kind of demonstration by which many other truths may be proved; and yet all around us, and all within us, so fully evince the existence, the power, and the goodness, of a Divine Being, that this may be considered a just and reasonable duty. On a subject so much above our comprehension, we must be content, in some degree, to walk by faith, and not by sight. We need not, therefore, stumble at this first principle of religion, to which our implicit acquiescence is required. "Without faith it is impossible to please God; for he that cometh unto him, must believe that He is, and

that He is a rewarder of all those that diligently seek him." When these principles have their proper influence on the heart, they are of great service to us in our passage through life; and tend greatly to reconcile our minds to those various circumstances, which are by an all-wise Providence, permitted or dispensed to us. It is by the eye of faith that we see Him, who is, to every other eye, invisible; and by this eye of Faith we are enabled to look beyond the things which are seen, and are temporal, to those things which are not seen, and are eternal. It was under the influence of this faith, that "Moses chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin; seeing Him who is invisible, and having an eye to the recompense of reward."

From faith in the Divine Being and Providence proceeds that "Hope which is as an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast." In the storms and tempests attendant on this probationary state of existence, an humble hope and trust in the mercies and providence of God, are essentially necessary to the preservation of the vessel, from being driven on the rocks or quicksands which surround our coast; and on which shipwreck is sometimes made of every thing that renders life valuable, or eternity desirable.

This hope or trust may be divided into two parts; first, as it relates to the providence of God, in reference to the things of this life; and secondly, as it relates to his mercy in respect to those things which pertain to that life which is to come. With respect to the first, our blessed Lord strengthens his disciples in their confidence in the Divine Providence, by many apt allusions and pressing exhortations: "I say unto you, take no thought (or rather, be not anxious) for your

life, what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink, nor yet for your body what ye shall put on.—Behold the fowls of the air; for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them.—Consider the lilies how they grow, they toil not, neither do they spin, and yet I say unto you, that Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith; Therefore seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness: and all these things shall be added unto you." We have, in the prophet Habakkuk an eminent instance of resignation to Divine protection, and of confidence therein. After foreseeing some impending calamities, he expresses himself in this animated and animating language: "Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the field shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation."

It sometimes happens that religiously disposed minds fall into a state of depression and discouragement, respecting their inward or their future state. This, so far as it excites vigilance and exertion, may be beneficial; but when its tendency is to lead to despair of the mercies of God, and to cast away our confidence in his goodness and loving-kindness, it becomes a disposition to which we ought not to give way, but should carefully guard against its attacks. This situation of mind is strongly described by the Psalmist in the seventy-seventh Psalm: "In

the day of my trouble I sought the Lord; my* hand was stretched out in the night and ceased not; my soul refused to be comforted. I remembered God, and was troubled, and my spirit was overwhelmed. Will the Lord cast off for ever; will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth his promise fail for evermore? hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?" Here the Psalmist seems to recollect his own peculiar weakness, and turns his reflections another way. "I said, this is my infirmity; but I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High. I will remember the works of the Lord; surely I will remember thy wonders of old. I will meditate also of all thy works, and talk of thy doings. Thy way, O God! is in the sanctuary: who is so great a God as our God?" In another Psalm, we find the pious David consoling himself in this encouraging soliloquy: "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him who is the health of my countenance, and my God." Here we see the benefit of attending to that apostolic exhortation: "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward."

The following passages point out the necessity and advantages of a proper trust or confidence in God, on all occasions: "Trust in the Lord with all thy heart, and lean not unto thy own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be

* See the marginal reading.

established. Commit thy way unto him, trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass. Judgment is before him, therefore trust thou in him."

CHAP. II.

On the Love of God.

When we consider the Attributes which are ascribed to the Divine Being, and the relation in which we stand to him, nothing can be more reasonable, nothing more becoming that relation, than the tribute of Love: it is a disposition of mind which we ought peculiarly to cultivate, as being, in an especial manner, connected both with our duty and happiness. When this feeling predominates in the mind, those religious restraints which are aptly described by "the yoke of Christ" become easy, and his burthen is made light. The ways of righteousness come to be "ways of pleasantness, and all its paths are peace."

Having, in the preliminary considerations*, treated on the subject of love, both as it relates to God and man, it will not be necessary now to enlarge much upon it. This duty is, however, in itself, so important, and the Scriptures afford so many exhortations and inducements to it, that it cannot be passed over here; nor should the cautions against those things which lessen the

* In a preceding part of the Treatise from which this publication is extracted.

sense of it upon our minds, be overlooked.

When our Saviour was insidiously asked; "Which is the great commandment of the law?" the reply was, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment." Did we place this duty sufficiently before us, as the most desirable object of our attainment, and frequently examine ourselves respecting it; considering at the same time the many reasonable motives which we have for fulfilling it; we should be likely to witness an increase of this love in our hearts, and feelingly to unite with the expressions of Holy Writ: "I love thy commandments above gold, yea, above fine gold. Thy word is very pure, therefore thy servant loveth it. Oh! love the Lord, all ye saints; for the Lord preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer. Let them that love thy name be joyful in thee, for thou Lord! wilt bless the righteous. Let such as love thy salvation say continually, The Lord be magnified. The Lord preserveth all them that love him."

But of all the inducements to the love of God, there is none so powerful as that which the Apostle mentions: "God commendeth his love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." In the enjoyment of this consoling faith, Christians can say, "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." Such was the prevalence and the establishment of this love in the heart of the Apostle, and some of his fellow-believers, that he could confidently declare: "I am persuaded that neither death not life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things

present, nor things to come; nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The principal proof of our love, arises from our obedience to what we know to be the Divine will concerning us, or his commandments to us. "If ye love me," says our Saviour, "keep my commandments." Consistent with this language, is that of the Apostle John: "This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous."

In order to guard us against the loss of that love, which is so important a part of our duty, the following advices and cautions are given; "Set your affections on things above, and not on things on the earth; love not the world, neither the things which are in the world; If any man love the world, the love of the father is not in him: for all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, are not of the Father, but of the world The world passeth away and the lust thereof: whosoever will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God, for the friendship of the world, is enmity with God." Let not these interesting cautions and observations be forgotten; and then the following salutations of the Apostle may be verified in our experience: "The Lord direct your hearts unto the love of God, and unto the patient waiting for Christ.—Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity."

CHAP. III.

On the Fear of God.

The next duty which we owe to the Divine Being, and which may probably be considered by many as previous to that of Love, is the fear of offending Him. This has been, in all ages, the disposition of the righteous, by which they have been, in a great measure, preserved from falling into those irreligious and immoral practices, which draw down Divine displeasure on men. When we consider the Omnipotence, the Omniscience, and the Justice of God, we shall find abundant cause for cherishing this Fear, accompanied with an awful reverence of spirit towards him. So forcibly was this duty impressed on the mind of one of the Patriarchs, that the Divine Being was styled, "The fear of Isaac." Joseph was an eminent example of the beneficial effects of this fear. He says of himself, "I fear God;" and he gave a striking proof of it, when, under a peculiar temptation, he resisted it with this memorable language, "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"

When we attend to all the beneficial consequences which are described in Scripture, as the result of this virtue, its importance must forcibly impress our minds, and should stimulate us to the

attainment of it. "Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God," was a precept early given to the Jewish nation, and was added to many of their legal institutions, as an incentive to duty. In the book of Job, we have a grand description of the inestimable value of true wisdom; which is, after all that is said of it, reduced to this simple, but important point: "The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil, is understanding." Solomon concludes his no less fine description of wisdom in similar words: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the Holy is understanding." In this description of wisdom, he also says: "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate." Again, "By the fear of the Lord, men depart from evil. It is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death. By humility, and the fear of the Lord, are riches, and honour, and life."

The Psalmist inculcates the Divine fear, in this inviting language: "Come, ye Children, and I will teach you the fear of the Lord. What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile. Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace and pursue it. The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open to their cry. The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth." We have many other incitements to this duty in the Scriptures; particularly in the Psalms: "God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him. He is to be feared above all gods. Thou,

even thou, O God of Jacob! art to be feared: and who may stand in thy sight, when once thou art angry? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared. Stand in awe, and sin not. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Let all the earth fear the Lord. Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. The Lord reigneth, let the people tremble. He sitteth between the Cherubims, let the earth be moved. Who would not fear thee, O King of Nations! for to thee doth it appertain."

But in the Holy Scriptures Christians are taught whom they should not fear, as well as whom they should fear, "Ye shall not fear other gods. Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of Heaven; for the customs of the people are vain. The fear of man bringeth a snare. Fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings. I, even I, am he that comforteth you: who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man which shall be made as grass; and forgettest the Lord thy maker, that hath stretched forth the Heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth?"

Our blessed Redeemer gave his disciples some particular instructions on this subject; "I say unto you, my friends, be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom you shall fear. Fear Him, who, after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, fear Him.

Thus we find in every dispensation the fear of God was a necessary attainment. It formed a prominent part in that message delivered by the angel, who was seen to fly in the midst of heaven,

having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth; saying with a loud voice, "Fear God, and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgments is come; and worship Him that made heaven and earth; and the sea, and the fountains of waters."

CHAP. IV.

On Religious Meditation.

By Religious Meditation, is meant that inward retirement of mind from the cares and concerns of this world, in which we may contemplate the works of God, both in creation and redemption: and consider the duties which we owe to him, and one to another.

To have the mind frequently engaged in this manner, is of no small importance to the religious improvement of a Christian. For this purpose, as well as for that of inward retirement and private prayer, some persons set apart particular times of the day; whilst others find it practicablo when they are engaged in their outward employments, inwardly to retire from the world's concerns, secretly to meditate upon the law of the Lord, to wait upon him for the renewal of their spiritual strength, and to pour out their supplications unto him. To prescribe the mode of performing these duties, is not my business; and indeed it is a point in which we cannot well

prescribe one for another. That they are duties, important and beneficial, will, no doubt, be generally admitted: and we have reason to believe, that they have been practised by the righteous of all generations. We are told that Enoch walked with God; and we may reasonably suppose, that this was by secret communion with him, and meditation upon his works and commands.

Of religious meditation, we have an example in the case of Isaac; and from the incidental mention of his "going into the field at eventide to meditate," a presumptive proof, at least, is afforded, that a similar practice was not uncommon with the Patriarchs. To Joshua, the successful leader of the children of Israel into the promised land, this command was given: "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shall meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein; for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success." We have but little left on record in the Scriptures, of the private, religious exercises of those concerning whom they are written, previously to the Book of Psalms. Here we find in the first Psalm, religious meditation represented as a material part of the employment of the man who is styled blessed. "His delight says the Psalmist, is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night." It was, no doubt, to this duty that the Psalmist alluded, when he gave this exhortation: "Commune with your own heart upon your bed; and be still." The benefits which result from religious meditation are thus described; "My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and

fatness, and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips, when I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches." Again we find this employment excellently and profitably illustrated, and its benefits under close conflicts strongly described: "I have considered the days of old; the years of ancient times. I call to remembrance my song in the night, and my spirit made diligent search. Will the Lord cast off for ever, and will he be favourable no more?" After various considerations of this kind the Psalmist concludes in this manner: "Surely I will remember thy wonders of old. I will meditate also of all thy works, and talk of thy doings. Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary: Who is so great a God as our God?"

But the inspired writers did not confine their meditation, to the law of their God, or to his providential dealings with his people. They saw him, and they adored him, in the works of creation. From these they drew many beautiful similes, and inculcated much important and humbling instruction. "The Heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handy-work. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Again, "When I consider thy heavens the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained, [I exclaim] What is man that thou art mindful of him; or the son of man, that thou visitest him!"

Our duties also afford very copious subjects for our meditation. Thus the Apostle Paul enumerates many particulars of a very comprehensive nature, and recommends them to the contemplation of his favourite Philippians:

"Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things." To this exhortation he adds these memorable words: "Those things which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do; and the God of peace shall be with you."

CHAP. V.

Watchfulness and Waiting upon God.

These duties are intimately connected with each other. Watchfulness is an exercise of the mind, in which we are concerned to guard against the approach and attack of evil, on the one hand; and on the other, to be looking for and ready to receive the communication of Divine good to the soul. The last may be termed, Waiting upon God. This expression may also be applied to a dependence on the Divine care and bounty, for the supply of our spiritual and temporal wants; and patiently waiting the Lord's time for this supply.

When we consider how we are surrounded in this world by temptations to evil; how much our own propensities incline us to comply with it; and that, in addition to these inducements

there is also an unwearied enemy and evil spirit, who is seeking our destruction; watchfulness will appear to be an indispensable duty. The world, the flesh, and the devil, are all represented in Holy writ as enemies, against which it is necessary to be upon our guard. "The world lieth in wickedness, and its friendship is enmity with God. The flesh lusteth against the Spirit;" and so powerful is that enemy, who has these weapons to war with against our happiness, that an Apostle formerly gave this important exhortation to the early believers: "Be sober, be vigilant, for your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about seeking whom he may devour." When these considerations have taken place in our minds, we shall be convinced of the propriety of that universal command given by our blessed Saviour: "What I say unto you, I say unto all; watch." Again, "Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation." Thus also the Apostles: "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith; quit you like men, be strong. Let us watch and be sober. Be ye sober, and watch unto prayer."

The truly humble-minded Christian, is frequently brought to feel his own incapacity for every good word and work. He is often made sensible of that important truth inculcated by his Divine Master: "No man can come unto me, except the Father which sent me, draw him." From this sense and feeling, he finds the necessity of patiently waiting upon God for help and strength in the performance of his religious duties. The benefit of this state of mind, is frequently described in Holy Writ, and its duty strongly enforced: "Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thy heart; wait, I say, on the Lord." Again, "I waited patiently

on the Lord, and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay; and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings; and he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God. Many shall see it and fear, and shall trust in the Lord." Thus does the royal Psalmist describe the beneficial consequences of waiting upon God, and Solomon represents wisdom, no doubt the wisdom which is from above, speaking in this manner: "Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors."

The prophet Habakkuk appears to have been sensible of the importance of this duty, both for his own particular benefit, and for the fulfilment of his prophetical office: "I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see, what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved." In this state of mind he received the Divine communication and commission, to "write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it." Thus also we find the Apostles were commanded by their Heavenly Master, previously to their entering on their Apostolical Office, "to wait at Jerusalem for the promise of the Father; which," saith he, "ye have heard of me."

I shall conclude this subject with the lively description given by the evangelical prophet, of the benefits arising from this exercise of mind: "Even the youths shall faint and grow weary, and the young men shall utterly fall; but they that wait upon the Lord, shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint."

CHAP. VI.

On Prayer.

Of all the duties which Religion requires, there is not one more clearly obligatory, or more interestingly important, than that of Prayer; by which it is scarcely necessary to say, is meant, the making our requests known to God, for those things of which we stand in need, whether temporal or spiritual. This is a duty which we may be said to owe to ourselves, as well as to God. When we consider our manifold wants, our infirmities, and our dangers, with our incapacity to supply or relieve ourselves; and when we reflect, that the Divine Being alone is capable of affording us that supply and assistance, which are necessary for our present and future well-being; the importance of this duty to ourselves, or for our own benefit, must be obvious. Again, when we consider, that God is the giver of every good and perfect gift; that the earth is his, and the fulness thereof; that in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; these considerations show, that prayer is a duty which we owe to his Omnipotence and Goodness: but in addition to these reasonable considerations, the commands which are given us in the Holy Scriptures, impose prayer upon us, as being indispensably due to the Almighty. We have various pre-

cepts and examples, respecting this duty, in the Old Testament; all tending to incite us to "lift up our hearts with our hands to God in the Heavens:" but in the New Testament the directions are most full and particular. Our blessed Lord inculcated this duty very forcibly among his disciples: and we are told, "that he spake a parable to them to this end, that men ought always to pray and not to faint." The Apostle Paul is very earnest in his injunctions on this head; "Be careful (or anxious) for nothing; but in every thing, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving. Pray without ceasing. I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting: that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings and for those that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty: for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour."

But there are some circumstances necessary to be attended to, in order to make our prayers acceptable, and such as will be likely to procure a favourable answer to them. The first of these is, sincerity of heart, in the abhorrence of sin, and in desires after holiness and purity. Of this the Psalmist appears to have been fully sensible, when he says, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." Again, "I will wash my hands in innocency, so will I compass thine altar, O Lord!" Solomon also makes a memorable observation on this subject: "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be an abomination to the Lord."

In another place he says, "The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord: but the prayer of the upright is his delight." In the answer which the young man who had been blind, made to the cavilling Jews, we have an instructive remark on the qualification for true prayer: "We know that God heareth not sinners; but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth." The Apostle John also inculcates a similar doctrine: "Beloved, if our hearts condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God: and whatsoever we ask we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight."

The direction and caution which were given by our Saviour on this subject, should also be remembered, in order to avoid that ostentatious disposition which mars, in the sight of God, all our otherwise good words and works: "When thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues, and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet: and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father, who is in secret; and thy Father who seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly."

Our Lord having thus cautioned his disciples against a desire to be seen and praised of men, proceeds to correct another false apprehension which some had entertained, that they should be heard for their much speaking. Of this notion he exposes the folly; and, in order to exemplify the doctrine which he taught, he gives his disciples a most comprehensive, and at the same time concise, specimen of prayer.

"Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be

thy name; thy kingdom come: thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen."

On one part of this excellent prayer, our blessed Lord makes a short comment, to show the importance of a disposition of mind, which, through Divine grace, it is in our power, and is certainly our duty, to attain. "If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." Of how great importance is this duty of forgiveness! and, may it not be added, how little is it attended to!

Our approaches to the throne of Divine grace, ought also to be accompanied with a trust in the mediation and intercession of Jesus Christ; to which he himself holds out this, and other encouraging promises: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you." We are also directed to "ask in faith, nothing wavering."

There is another important requisite necessary to be attended to, in the performance of the solemn duty of prayer. This is, the assistance of the Holy Spirit; the necessity of which the Apostle Paul clearly sets forth, when he says, "The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for, as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered: and he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the ind of the Spirit, because he maketh interces-

sion for the saints according to the will of God." The same Apostle, in another place, describes true prayer in this manner: "Praying always, with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance."

But notwithstanding these requisites for the performance of true prayer, let not any be discouraged from an attention to this important duty from a sense of their own imperfections. If we are sincerely desirous of being brought into a state of perfect acceptance with our Maker, we may approach him with an humble dependence on the Spirit and mediation of his Son, putting up our prayers unto him, and "watching thereunto with all perseverance." Thus the penitent sinner will meet with that gracious acceptance which is mercifully held out to him, and the truth of the language of the Psalmist, will be verified in his experience:—"As the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy towards them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him: for he knoweth our frame, he remembereth that we are dust."

Great is the importance of a due attention to the duty on which we are now treating, and to the various circumstances necessary for its acceptable performance. Of this the Psalmist appears to have been deeply sensible, when he preferred this petition to the Divine Being: "Let my prayer come up before thee as incense, and the lifting up of my hands as an evening sacrifice." For want of a due attention to those circumstances, there is reason to fear, that many

at this time may be subject to the same remark, which the Apostle James makes concerning some in his day: "Ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not; ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss; that ye may consume it upon your lusts." On the other hand, we are told by the same Apostle, that, "the fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." This, we have good reason to believe, is the Prayer which ascends like incense, before the Throne of God, and of the Lamb.

CHAP. VII.

On Thanksgiving and Praise.

Thanksgiving is an expression of our gratitude to the Divine Being for favours received. Praise may convey a sense of admiration, as well as of gratitude, and is applicable to the power and wisdom as well as to the goodness of God. Thus the Psalmist: "Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!"

The reasonableness of these duties, and the obligations to perform them, are so self-evident to every considerate mind that believes in a Divine Being and Providence, that, if we had no injunctions to the practice of them, they

would unavoidably become an almost involuntary effusion from every feeling heart. But it is to be regretted that, either from want of consideration, or from want of sensibility, there are among those who are surrounded with blessings on every hand, many who are inattentive to the favours which they enjoy, or ungrateful for them. Ingratitude to the Divine Being for temporal or spiritual blessings, is a sin which is peculiarly marked by his displeasure. Of this we have a strong proof in the instance of the Israelites, of whom, after recapitulating the peculiar favours by which they had been distinguished, it is said: "But Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked, then he forsook God who made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation. They provoked him to jealousy with strange Gods, they sacrificed unto devils, and not to God.—And when the Lord saw it, he abhorred them, because of the provoking of his sons, and of his daughters."

Here we see the idolatry of the Jews described as the consequence of their ingratitude for the blessings which were conferred upon them; and the Apostle, in describing the depraved state of the heathen world, both in its religion and morality, traces it to the same source: "Because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened: professing to be wise they became fools; and changed the glory of the incorruptible God, into an image made like to corruptible man: and to birds, and to four-footed beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own

bodies between themselves; who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen." When we consider these lamentable consequences, as the result of unthankfulness and ingratitude, how important is the exhortation of the prophet Jeremiah: "Give glory to the Lord your God before he cause darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains; and while ye look for light, he turn it into the shadow of death, and make it gross darkness."

Numerous are the examples, as well as the exhortations, which are contained in the Holy Scriptures, and particularly in the book of Psalms, relating to this subject, from which it may be sufficient to extract the following; "It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, O Most High; to show forth thy loving-kindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night. Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee. Bless the Lord, O my soul! and all that is within me bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul and forget not all his benefits; who forgiveth all thy iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies. Oh! that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men."

The inspired writers of the New Testament likewise furnish us with many incitements to this duty. Christianity itself was introduced with, "Glory to God in the highest," as an acknowledgment previously necessary to the promotion of "peace on earth, and good-will to-

wards men." We find the mother of our Lord pouring out her soul, in a grateful song of praise, which begins with this pious language: "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour—for he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name." The Apostle Paul very pressingly inculcates an attention to these duties. "In every thing," says he, "give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus. And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess, but be ye filled with the spirit: speaking to yourselves in psalms, and in hymns, and in spiritual songs; singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always, for all things, unto God and the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. By him, therefore, let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name."

It is not, however, a formal performance of this duty that will meet with Divine appprobation. It must, like prayer, be the produce of an humble and sanctified heart. When this is attained to, thanksgiving and praise will frequently become involuntary effusions, and ascend with acceptance before Him who is the Giver of every good and perfect gift; and, as this state of mind is continued in, qualification will finally be experienced to join with that innumerable multitude, mentioned in the Book of Revelations, who "stood before the Throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, saying, Salvation to our God, who sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb;" to which sacred anthem the whole Angelic Host, returned this responsive language:" Amen. Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour,

and power, and might, be unto our God, for ever and ever. Amen."

CHAP. VIII.

On Public Worship, and the appropriation of one Day in the Week for this purpose.

The Public Worship of the Almighty is a special duty of all men, who have opportunity and ability for it. This results from the relation in which we all stand to God, as our Creator, Preserver, and Benefactor. Common benefits demand united thanksgiving and praises. A social acknowledgment of these mercies and blessings, not only becomes us as dependent beings, but is attended with various advantages. The rich and prosperous, when thus assembled with the poor and afflicted, and acknowledging their dependence on the same great Benefactor, may learn humility, and be led to sentiments of charity towards their fellow-creatures. The children of poverty and distress, whilst assembled with the opulent, and joining them in solemn worship, may feel that they are all the offspring of one gracious Parent; all equally dependent on his bounty and goodness; and from those feelings they may learn to support, with resignation and hope, that allotment which the Father of Mercies has assigned to them. In the one class, senti-

ments of pride and contempt for others, are likely to be suppressed; and in the other, envy, discontent, and murmuring, are discouraged. Whatever differences may elsewhere exist among men, in the presence of the Divine Being "the rich and the poor meet [equally] together: for the Lord is [equally] the maker of them all."

The Holy Scriptures inform us, that this duty had been practised in all ages, by those who had been distinguished for piety and virtue. In early times, the sacrifices of animals, or offerings of the fruits of the earth, were the most common mode of publicly acknowledging a dependence on the Divine Being and were most probably of Divine institution; but when it pleased the Almighty to separate from the rest of mankind a people, whom he distinguished by peculiar precepts and favours, it appears that in addition to those offerings, they met together for the performance of Divine worship: "Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary; I am the Lord." This precept points out the institution of a time and place for public worship; and they were both religiously observed by the pious among the Jews; though there is reason to believe they were much neglected by many of another description.

The Psalmist, with that humble piety which peculiarly distinguishes his character, is an eminent instance of public, as well as private devotion; "As for me, I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercy, and in thy fear will I worship towards thy Holy temple." Again, "We will go into his tabernacle; we will worship at his footstool." And, in order that he may perform this service acceptably, he forms an excellent resolution: "I will wash my hands in

innocency; so will I compass thy altar, O Lord! that I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all thy wondrous works." Nor was it merely as an obligation, that he performed this important duty: "His delight was in the law of the Lord;" and this made the performance of religious worship a grateful, not an irksome task. "Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thy honour dwelleth. How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts! I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of God,—for a day in thy courts is better than a thousand [elsewhere.] I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than dwell in the tents of wickedness."

Although the Christian dispensation exempted its professors from the ceremonious part of the Jewish law, it did not, by any means, exempt them from the duty of public worship. We have the examples of our Saviour and his Apostles, in support of this practice. The Apostle Paul is indeed very strenuous in inculcating it: "I beseech you brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service;" and in the Epistle to the Hebrews, public worship is thus excellently illustrated and enforced: "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest, by the blood of Jesus; by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having a High Priest over the House of God, let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith;—not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another,

and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."

The Christian religion has, however, freed its professors from being confined to particular places, for the performance of religious worship. Thus our Saviour taught his disciples: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them:" and in the memorable conversation, which he held with the Samaritan woman, he showed that public worship was not to be confined to any particular place; for when she inquired of him, whether Jerusalem, or the mountain of Samaria, was the true place of worship, he set them, and, by consequence, all other particular places aside, as being exclusively appropriated to this purpose. "Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, [exclusively] worship the Father. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in Spirit and in truth." Here we see the fulfilling of the evangelical prophecy: "In every place, incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering."

Though no place is exclusively essential to the performance of public worship; yet some place is necessary for "the assembling of ourselves together:" and some time must be peculiarly appropriated to this purpose. Under the Jewish law, and most probably prior to that time, the seventh day of the week was set apart for this service: but when that dispensation was abrogated, the primitive Christians thought proper to alter the time from the seventh to the first day of the

week. Although the ceremonial part of the Jewish sabbath is not obligatory upon Christians, yet several of the reasons assigned for its institution, apply to us equally with them. Christians in all ages have therefore, agreed in the appropriation of a seventh day, or one day in the week, to be particularly set apart for public worship, and for other means of religious improvement; as also for a time of relaxation and rest from bodily labour, to those who are subject to it. This indulgence was extended, under the law, to the animal creation, as well as to those persons who were in a state of servitude and bondage: "That thine ox and thine ass may rest; and the son of thy handmaid, and the stranger, may be refreshed."

The religious observance of one day in the week, is of so much importance to the preservation of piety and virtue; and the neglect of it is so evidently marked with irreligion, and, in general, with immorality, that however necessary it is to avoid the superstitious observance of it, which our Saviour had occasion to censure, in the time of his personal appearance on earth; yet every reasonable consideration conspires to press the practice closely upon us, as affording an opportunity, which many could not otherwise easily obtain, of acquiring religious instruction and improvement; and of publicly performing that worship, which is due unto "Him that made Heaven and Earth, the seas, and the fountains of waters."

The pious Christian does not, however, confine his public devotions to one day in the week. Sensible of the obligation, and feeling the benefit of a more frequent performance of this religious service, he embraces opportunities, when afforded

to him, of attending on public worship, on some other day, or days, than that which is specially set apart for this purpose: and, although this may in some instances, require him to leave his temporal concerns; and may seem to be attended with some worldly disadvantages; yet the views which he entertains of religious obligations, induce him to follow the example of the good king David, when, on a certain occasion, he made use of this disinterested language: "Neither will I offer burnt-offerings unto the Lord my God, of that which doth cost me nothing."

CHAP. IX.

On Obedience and Patience.

After treating on the preceding particular duties, it may be proper to take notice of the general duty of Obedience; and to connect with it that of Patience. By obedience is meant the practical and active part of those duties, which we know to be the Divine will concerning us.

When the mind is impressed with the belief of the power and goodness of God, and brought under the influence of that love and fear which we owe to him, obedience to the manifestations of his will, becomes the necessary result of this impression and influence. But, as the operation of these principles is generally slow and gradual, and the Christian traveller has many temptations and difficulties to encounter, before he has reason to believe, that, "in him verily is the love of God perfected;" it is of importance to know, that simple obedience to the Divine will is an

indispensable obligation: "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams: for rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry."

Fear and love are, however, motives which are essential to true obedience. We find them in the Holy Scriptures used to excite the minds of the people to the service of God, and to an attention to his commands: "Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God and serve him. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, and keep his charge and his statutes, and his judgments, and his commandments alway. Ye shall observe to do as the Lord your God hath commanded you: ye shall not turn aside to the right-hand, or to the left; that ye may live, and that it may be well with you. Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel;—Obey my voice, and walk ye in all my ways, that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you."

In the New Testament, the importance of obedience to the Divine will and commands, is very strongly enforced. Our blessed Redeemer manifested how little he sought the praise of men, and how much he desired the glory of his Father, and the real good of mankind, when he gave this salutary caution to his hearers: "Not every one that saith unto me Lord! Lord! shall enter the kingdom; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in Heaven." Again, he saith; "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." And it was the observation of his beloved disciple, "He that doeth the will of God, abideth for ever."

Besides the particular instructions given by the Apostles of Christ, the general duty of obedience, or keeping the divine commands, is thus enforced:

"Not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your ownselves. This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous. Hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar; and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him, verily, is the love of God perfected." When we consider these various testimonies to the importance of the practical part of religion; in which is necessarily involved a belief of its doctrines, because these are likewise Divine commands; we shall see the propriety of that conclusion, to which Solomon, after all his researches, was brought: "Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man."

Intimately connected with Obedience, is the duty of Patience; by which is understood the bearing with fortitude of mind and resignation to the Divine will, whatever is permitted to befall us in this probationary state of existence. Obedience and Patience, or to do and suffer the whole will of God, may be said to comprehend the whole of those duties which religion and virtue require. Patience therefore holds an important place among the duties of a Christian. His life is aptly compared to a state of warfare, in which he has not only much to do, but much to bear. He must in common with other men, submit to many privations and trials; and sometimes his religion will subject him to more; for which, however, it affords an ample compensation. But as this compensation is not always immediate, we are called upon by our faith, our hope, and our

love to the Supreme Being, without whose providential attention, we are told not a hair of our heads falleth to the ground, to bear with holy resignation, whatever he permits to befall us; and, in conformity to those excellent examples which are transmitted to us in Holy Writ, to say, when sufferings and trials are our lot: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. Not my will but thine be done. The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?"

When our Lord was apprizing his disciples of the afflictions which would befall them, he gave them this seasonable exhortation: "In your patience possess ye your souls." And the Apostle Paul says, "We glory in tribulations: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed, because the Love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. For which cause we faint not; for though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day: for our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things that are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, gives the following instructive exhortations on this subject: "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him; for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. We have had fathers of our flesh who corrected us, and we gave them reverence; shall

we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits, and live? For they, verily, for a few days chastened us, for their own pleasure: but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening, for the present, seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them who are exercised thereby."

The apostle James, among other exhortations to the duty of Patience, gives the following: "Take my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction and patience. Behold, we count them happy who endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that he is very pitiful, and of tender mercy."

As affliction is more or less the lot of humanity, it is of the utmost importance that we endeavour to have our minds fortified by patience, which may be called the strong hold of religion and virtue. To this end it may be beneficial to us to consider, how much we enjoy, or may enjoy, and of how little we are worthy. Humility is the ground-work of patience. It gives light to the mind, and strength to the heart. "But if thou faint (says Solomon) in the day of adversity, thy strength is small." The humble, resigned mind knows that all things shall work together for good; and in times of affliction is enabled to say with the prophet: 'Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the field shall yield no meat, the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will joy in the God of my salvation."

CHAP. X.

On Repentance towards God, and Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

When we consider the number and extent of our duties to God, on the one hand; and the depravity and frailty of human nature, on the other; we must suppose that the neglect or violation of these duties will, at times, take place, even with those who may make the most early and regular advances in the way of holiness; but with respect to the generality of mankind, this neglect and violation are so prevalent, and self-evident, that any attempt to demonstrate them would be superfluous. If, therefore, it is, as it ought to be, a matter of concern to us, to live and die in the Divine favour, Repentance, united with amendment of life, becomes a most important duty.

The very first sermons which were preached both by our Saviour, and his fore-runner, the Baptist, were on the subject of Repentance; and in a few energetic expressions they enforced this first principle of the doctrine of Christ: "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. Bring forth fruits meet for repentance." With these precepts was laid, as it were, the foundation of that religion, with which the world has been blessed through Jesus Christ. Repentance was, no doubt, always a necessary duty, since the transgressions of our first parents: but the gospel

dispensation being more particularly applied to the depraved state of human nature, this first work of true religion is primarily inculcated. We also find, that when the disciples went forth to preach and to teach, this appears to have been the first and principal part of their mission: for we are told by one of the Evangelists, that "they went out and preached that men should repent." After the ascension of our Lord, and the pouring forth of the Spirit on the Apostles and Disciples, we find the doctrine of Repentance was preached in this powerful language: "Repent ye, and be converted; that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord: and he shall send Jesus Christ, who before was preached unto you."

In that excellent relation of his gospel labours, which the Apostle Paul, gave to the elders of Ephesus, we may perceive that repentance formed a very prominent part in the doctrines which he taught: "testifying (says he) both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."

The connexion of Repentance with Faith in Christ, forms a peculiar excellence of the gospel dispensation, and to which it is of the utmost importance to attend. How consoling is this consideration! "If any man sin we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world." Numerous are the testimonies in holy writ to this gracious design of our merciful Redeemer. The evangelical prophet strongly and clearly speaks of it: "He was wounded for our transgressions; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes are we

healed. All we, like sheep, have gone astray: we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." This passage was opened to the Ethiopian Eunuch, and applied to Christ by Philip the Evangelist.

The doctrine of Faith in Christ, as the means of reconciliation with God, is forcibly inculcated in the writings of the Apostles. To repeat all that they say on this subject, would be to transcribe a large portion of their Epistles. We are told by our Saviour himself, when some inquired of him, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God; This is the work of God, that ye believe on him, whom God hath sent." The importance of this belief, or faith, is thus inculcated by the Apostle Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans: "Now the righteousness of God without the law, is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets: even the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all, and upon all them that believe; (for there is no difference; for all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God;) being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God."

The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, largely exemplifies the doctrine of Christian redemption. The eighth, ninth, and tenth chapters are particularly forcible and interesting, in the manner in which this subject is treated; and it will be proper to recite, in this place, some of the pertinent exhortations and observations with

which he closes the subject: "Having, therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he has consecrated for us through the veil,—that is to say, his flesh: and having a high Priest over the House of God; let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith. He that despised Moses's law, died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who has trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing and done despite to the Spirit of Grace? For we know him, who hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me: I will recompense, saith the Lord: and again, The Lord shall judge his people.—It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

Seeing then, that our duty and interest are both intimately connected with our possessing faith in Christ; let us embrace it with full purpose of heart, and hold fast the profession of it without wavering. Yet let us not forget that "faith without works is dead, being alone;" and that we ought therefore to "add to our faith, virtue:" and to hold it in conjuction with a good conscience: thus may we entertain a well-grounded hope, that, when this probationary state shall terminate, we shall "receive the end of our faith, even the salvation of our souls."

FINIS.

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No cards

A Christian Memento.

IF use could make a wrong thing harmless, that which I am about to notice would be no evil at all, since it is hardly possible to travel the roads in England, or to pass an hour in the streets of her cities, seaports, or great towns, without being reminded of it; nor is the country indeed, much freer than the town, I mean, from the practice of taking God's name in vain.

It is the custom of many, on very slight occasions, to use such expressions as these: By God! In the name of God! For God's sake! Good God! Lord have mercy! Lord bless me! and the like. Now all this is wrong. That holy name should never be mentioned but on serious subjects, deliberately, and with fear and reverence. Let us not, by thus abusing it provoke

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his displeasure, who intends it for higher purposes, even for his worship and praise. Besides, how absurd to call upon Him, nay, to swear by him, in matters too trifling for us to summon a fellow-creature as aid or witness!

It is the practice again, of some, to assert or deny, to jest or wrangle, with most heavy imprecations upon themselves, of which it shall suffice to instance the expression, G—d d—mn me, or a shorter phrase, implying nothing less. Now, what is it to be damned? Is it not to be shut up in despair, separate from God and goodness, from light and hope, and the society of the blessed? No man in his senses could seriously calldown on his own head this dreadful vengeance. Then why do it in thoughtless levity? Can this be the part of a rational being?

There is yet another practice, more hurtful than these. It is to curse others; to fix upon them, in words, and sometimes, (it is to be feared,) too nearly in wish, this same damnation, or, it may be, (with cruel mercy,) only the blasting of eyes and limbs. This is, alas! the common fault of the brave—of those who encounter the dangers of the seas, the edge of battle. But is it manly? is it becoming a brave and generous

man, to wish even his bitterest enemy in that state, from which, could he see him in it, and feel the woes he had inflicted, he would instantly give his all to redeem him? Again, what a support in the hour of danger, in the surprise of sudden death, does he lose, who carries in his breast a cursing conscience!

To all this it will perhaps be answered, that no such things are meant—that it is merely an ill *habit.* But how important are *habits!* Have we not every reason to believe, that those habits of the mind and affections (be they good or evil) in which we quit this life, will continue to clothe us in the next, that they will pass with us out of time into eternity, and that in them we shall have to stand as in white raiment, or in filthy rags, as the sheep on the right hand, or the goats on the left, before the Judge of all! What will a man then think of himself, if, trembling at the view of his sins, and earnest (though now too late) to cry for pardon, he shall find that heart can conceive, that tongue can utter nothing better than, G—d d—mn me, or, blast my eyes and limbs for ever?

Reader! (of every class,) bear particularly in mind the solemn injunction. *Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his*

Name in vain. Indeed, had there not been this express command, yet knowing that *holy and reverend is his name*, "a pious mind," (to use the words of a minister of the Church of England, in an address* to the first description of persons I have mentioned,) "would naturally be inclined never to express it but for holy purposes, and with reverence. "How then," (continues this writer,) "can we account for the frequent use of *God* and *Lord*, and sometimes *Jesus* and *Christ*, by persons that attend the public worship of our Church, and hear the Third Commandment every Sunday? Some who are reckoned religious, not only occasionally use one or more of these sacred names with the word *good*, as a mere expression of surprise, but, seemingly from habit, have adopted a petition of our Church service, when uttering their sudden wonder at any uncommon relation, or their concern on hearing of any calamitous event; while at the moment, they do not even think of God, nor desire at that time his *mercy;* their thoughts being entirely then engaged by what may have excited their unmeaning exclamation. *These things ought not so to be.* Whence then are they so common? The

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*"A short Dissuasive from a common Sin, easily avoided," &c. London, 1808. Sold by *Rivingtons* and *Hatchard*.

frequency of taking the name of the Lord our God in vain, cannot be accounted for, in my opinion, but from the want of consideration and a vital sense of religion."

The author from whom I have quoted, proceeds to point out how "the sin" under examination "may be easily avoided."

"First" (he says) "let this be considered, that there being neither profit nor pleasure in the commission and practice of this sin, though custom may have introduced the habit, which will require attention and trouble to correct, yet corrupt nature cannot plead any *loss* that can be sustained by a reform.

"Secondly, let relations and friends contribute to check this sin, by reminding each other who may be guilty of it.

"Thirdly, I would impress on the minds of my readers, that whatever steps be adopted as the means conducive to the right discharge of any duty, they should ever be considered as *means only*, which we are bound to take; we should look up to God, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift, for a blessing on our humble

endeavours; and we may be assured that if we fervently pray for the Divine assistance through Christ, we shall be heard, and become more than earthly conquerors: we shall obtain victory over our evil habits, and be enabled to encourage others to imitate our example.

"Some perusers of these pages," adds the author, "may soon forget what has been laid before them, and not recollect the warning given them, till that day when *every idle word shall be brought to judgment*. Others, I hope, may profit by these observations; and if but one guilty person should attend to what has been said, and be dissuaded from taking the *Name of the Lord our God in vain*, I shall think myself rewarded by the knowledge of it, and shall rejoice that my endeavours have not been useless nor without some salutary effect."

Now, Reader, to conclude, if thou hast unhappily contracted this contagion, in whatever degree, and art willing to have thy cure begun, keep this *Memento* by thee. Look at it in the morning, to warn thee; in the evening, to remind thee wherein thou hast offended; and, as oft as thou art conscious of the sin, lift up thy heart to God, and say in secret to Him who hears thy

very thoughts: "Lord have mercy upon me, and help me, for Christ's sake." Who knows whether the conviction may not last, till his saving help shall have rescued thee from an evil, which is deplorable for man under any name, and peculiarly disgraceful in the CHRISTIAN.

*** Read Deut. xxviii. 58. Psalm cix. 17—19. Mat. v. 34—37. 44. xii. 35—37. xxv. 30—46. James iii. 1—18. v. 12.

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EXTRACTS

FROM

ERASMUS,

ON THE SUBJECT OF

WAR:

Taken from a Publication under the Title of ANTIPOLEMUS, printed in the Year, 1794.

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Preface.

THAT God is Love, is declared in Holy Scripture by the Spirit of God: that Christianity proceeding from the same Spirit, is a system of Peace and Concord is a position assented to by all its professors. The first of these propositions being received, the second becomes so reasonable, that to argue it is unnecessary. How then has it happened that among nations professing this system, the practice of War has been so general, that the minds of men have become familiarized with its appearance, nay, almost reconciled to its deformities? Because men have lost sight, in this respect, of the true end of the Gospel—because their hearts have departed from its spirit, and their reason has become biassed. Here, then, argument is *required, to attack the strong holds of prejudice, to bring the awakened judgment, the genuine though latent feelings of the Christian, to bear upon this inveterate, yet (if the promises of God may be trusted) not irremediable evil.*

After many years of discord and slaughter, Europe is just beginning to taste the sweets of Peace. A state of peace is now almost universally admitted to be desirable: it is, then, wise to study the means of

preserving it inviolate. These means are before us: they have been presented to the world for more than Eighteen Centuries, and though hitherto so very partially applied, they are of sovereign efficacy.

The following Extracts from the Writings of the pious and learned ERASMUS, *contain a summary of excellent arguments on the incongruity of* WAR *with* CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLES; *and in the present pacific season, it is hoped that leisure and attention will be devoted to a candid examination of a subject which so eminently concerns the happiness of the* WORLD.

It may be proper to add, that the author of the work, through the medium of which, as mentioned in the title-page, these extracts are derived, has professedly given a free translation from the original Latin, using, he says, "where perspicuity seemed to require, the allowed liberty of occasional paraphrase."

EXTRACTS

FROM

ERASMUS.

IF there is in the affairs of mortal men any one thing which it is proper uniformly to explode: which it is incumbent on every man, by every lawful means to avoid, to deprecate, to oppose, that one thing is, doubtless, WAR. There is nothing more unnaturally wicked, more productive of misery, more extensively destructive, more obstinate in mischief, more unworthy of man, as formed by nature, much more of man professing *Christianity*.

Yet, wonderful to relate! in these times war is every where rashly, and on the slightest pretext, undertaken; cruelly and savagely conducted, not only by *Unbelievers*, but by *Christians;* not only by *Laymen*, but by *Priests* and *Bishops;* not only by the young and inexperienced, but even by men far advanced in life, who must have seen and felt its dreadful consequences; not only

by the lower order, fickle in their nature; but above all by princes, whose duty it is to compose the rash passions of the unthinking multitude by superior wisdom, and the force of reason. Nor are there ever wanting men, learned in the law, and even divines, who are ready to furnish firebrands for the nefarious work, and to fan the latent sparks into a flame.

Hence it happens, that war is now considered so much a thing of course, that the wonder is, how any man can disapprove of it; so much sanctioned by authority and custom, that it is deemed impious (I had almost said heretical) to have borne testimony against a practice, in its principle most profligate, and in its effects pregnant with every kind of calamity. If any one considers a moment the organization and external figure of the body, will he not instantly perceive, that nature, or rather the God of Nature, created the human animal not for *war*, but for *love* and *friendship*; not for mutual *destruction*, but for mutual *service* and *safety*; not to commit *injuries*, but for acts of *reciprocal beneficence*.

To all other animals, nature, or the God of Nature, has given appropriate weapons of offence. The inborn violence of the bull is seconded by weapons of pointed horn; the rage of the lion with claws. On the wild boar are fixed terrible tusks. The elephant, in addition to the toughness of his hide, and his enormous size, is defended with a proboscis. The crocodile is covered with scales, as with a coat of mail. To others nature has given venom as a substitute for a weapon; and added a hideous shape, eyes that beam terror, and a hissing noise. She has also given them antipathies and discordant dispositions corresponding with this exterior, that they

might wage an offensive or defensive war with animals of a different species.

But *Man* she brought into the world naked from his mother's womb, weak, tender, unarmed, his flesh of the softest texture, his skin smooth and delicate, and susceptible of the slightest injury. There is nothing observable in his limbs adapted to fighting, or to violence. Unable either to speak, or walk, or help himself to food, he can only implore relief by tears and wailing; so that from this circumstance alone might be collected, that man is an animal born for that love and friendship which is formed and cemented by the mutual interchange of benevolent offices. Moreover, nature evidently intended that man should consider himself indebted for the boon of life, not so much to herself as to the kindness of his fellow-man; that he might perceive himself designed for social affections, and the attachments of friendship and love. Then she gave him a countenance not frightful and forbidding, but mild and placid, intimating by external signs, the benignity of his disposition. She gave him eyes full of affectionate expression, the indexes of a mind delighting in social sympathy. She gave him arms to embrace his fellow-creatures. She gave him lips to express a union of heart and soul. She gave him alone the power of laughing, a mark of the joy of which he is susceptible. She gave him tears, the symbol of clemency and compassion. She gave him also a voice, not a menacing and frightful yell, but bland, soothing, and friendly. Not satisfied with these marks of her peculiar favour, she bestowed on him alone the use of speech and reason; a gift which tends more than any other to conciliate and cherish benevolence,

and a desire of rendering mutual services; so that nothing among human creatures might be done by violence. She implanted in man a hatred of solitude, and a love of company. She sowed in his heart the seeds of every benevolent affection; and thus rendered what is most salutary, at the same time most agreeable. For what is more agreeable than a friend? what so necessary? Indeed, if it were possible to conduct life conveniently, without mutual intercourse, yet nothing could be pleasant without a companion, unless man should have divested himself of humanity, and degenerated to the rank of a wild beast. Lastly, to man is given a spark of the Divine Mind, which stimulates him, without any hope of reward, and of his own free will to do good to all: for of God, this is the most natural and appropriate attribute, to consult the good of all by disinterested beneficence. If it were not so, how happens it that we feel an exquisite delight, when we find that any man has been preserved from danger, injury, or destruction, by our offices or intervention?

Such is the true portrait of man, however faintly and imperfectly delineated. It remains, that I compare it, as I proposed, with the picture of War: and see how the two tablets accord, when hung up together, and contrasted.

Now then view, with the eyes of your imagination, savage troops of men, horrible in their very visages and voices; men clad in steel, drawn up on every side in battle array, armed with weapons, frightful in their crash and their very glitter; mark the horid murmur of the confused multitude, their threatening eye-balls, the harsh jarring din of drums and clarions, the terrific sound of the trumpet, the thunder of the

cannon, a noise not less formidable than the real thunder of heaven, and more hurtful, a mad shout like that of the shrieks of Bedlamites, a furious onset, a cruel butchering of each other!—See the slaughtered and the slaughtering!—heaps of dead bodies, fields flowing with blood, rivers reddened with human gore! It sometimes happens that a brother falls by the hand of a brother, a kinsman upon his nearest kindred, a friend upon his friend, who while both are actuated by this fit of insanity, plunges the sword into the heart of one by whom he was never offended, not even by a word of his mouth!—So deep is the tragedy, that the bosom shudders even at the feeble description of it, and the hand of humanity drops the pencil while it paints the scene.

In the mean time I pass over, the corn fields trodden down, peaceful cottages and rural mansions burnt to the ground, villages and towns reduced to ashes, the cattle driven from their pasture, innocent women violated, old men dragged into captivity, churches defaced and demolished, every thing laid waste, a prey to robbery, plunder, and violence!

Not to mention the consequences which ensue to the people *after* a war, even the most fortunate in its event, and the justest in its principle; the poor, the unoffending common people, robbed of their little hard-earned property: the great, laden with taxes: old people bereaved of their children; more cruelly killed by the murder of their offspring, than by the sword: happier if the enemy had deprived them of the sense of their misfortune, and life itself, at the same moment: Women far advanced in age, left destitute, and more cruelly put to death, than if

they had died at once by the point of the bayonet: widowed mothers, orphan children, houses of mourning; and families, that once knew better days, reduced to extreme penury.

Why need I dwell on the evils which morals sustain by war, when every one knows, that *from war proceeds at once every kind of evil which disturbs and destroys the happiness of human life?*

As I just now drew the portrait of man and the picture of war, so now it is my intention to compare war with peace, to compare a state most pregnant with misery, and most wicked in its origin, with a state profuse of blessings, and contributing in the highest degree to the happiness of human nature; it will then appear to be downright insanity to go in search of war with so much disturbance, so much labour, so great profusion of blood and treasure, and at such a hazard after all, when with little labour, less expense, no bloodshed, and no risk, peace might be preserved inviolate.

Now amidst all the good this world affords what is more delightful to the heart of man, what more beneficial to society, than love and amity! Nothing, surely. Yet what s peace, but love and amity subsisting between great numbers? And, on the other hand, what is war, but hatred and enmity subsisting between great numbers? But it is the nature of all good, that the more it is extended, the greater the good becomes, the more benign its influence; therefore if the amicable union of individuals is so sweet and so salutary, how much will the sum total of happiness be augmented, if kingdom with kingdom and nation with nation, coalesce in this amicable union? On the other hand, it is the

nature of all evil, that its malignity increases, the more it is extended; and therefore if it is wretched, if it is wicked for one man to meet another with a sword pointed at his vitals, how much more wretched and more wicked, that *thousands* and *tens of thousands* should meet in the same manner? By union, little things are augmented to a respectable magnitude, by disunion, the greatest fall to insignificance and dissolution. Peace is, indeed, at once the mother and the nurse of all that is good for man: War, on a sudden, and at one stroke, overwhelms, extinguishes, abolishes, whatever is cheerful, whatever is happy and beautiful, and pours a foul torrent of disasters on the life of mortals. Peace shines upon human affairs like the vernal sun. The fields are cultivated, the gardens bloom, the cattle are fed upon a thousand hills, new buildings arise, ancient edifices are repaired, riches flow, pleasures smile, laws retain their vigour, the discipline of the police prevails, religion glows with ardour, justice bears sway, humanity and charity increase, arts and manufactures feel the genial warmth of encouragement, the gains of the poor are more plentiful, liberal studies flourish, the young are well educated, the old enjoy their ease, marriages are happy, good men thrive, and the bad are kept under controul. But no sooner does the storm of war begin to lower, than what a deluge of miseries and misfortunes seizes, inundates, and overwhelms all things within the sphere of its action? The flocks are scattered, the harvest trampled, the husbandman butchered, villas and villages burnt, cities and states, that have been ages rising to their flourishing state subverted by the fury of one tempest, the storm of war.

So much easier is the task of *doing harm* than of *doing good;* of *destroying* than of *building up!* The earnings of honest industry, the wealth of quiet citizens, are transferred to the pockets of execrable robbers and murderers: private houses exhibit the dismal effects of fear, sorrow, and complaint; and all places resound with the voice of lamentation. The loom stands still; the trowel, the axe, and the hammer are silent; and the poor manufacturers must either starve, or have recourse to wicked practices for daily bread. The rich either deplore the diminution and loss of their property, or lie under terrible apprehension for what remains; in both circumstances rendered by war incapable of enjoying the common comforts of life. Marriages are few, or attended with distressful and fatal consequences. Matrons, deserted by their husbands, now forced to the wars, pine at home in childless solitude. The laws are compelled to silence, charity is laughed at, justice has no dwelling-place, and religion becomes an object of scorn, till no distinction is left between the sacred and the profane. Youth is corrupted by every species of vice. Old men lament their longevity: and their grey hairs descend with sorrow to the grave. No honour is paid to learning, sciences, arts; the elegant pursuits of liberal and honourable minds. In a word, more misery is felt from war than the eloquence of any man, much more than mine, is able to describe.

Many, alas! are the evils by which miserable mortality is tormented, worn out, and at last overwhelmed. We read of whole cities buried in ruins by earthquakes, or burnt to ashes by lightning, whole countries swallowed up in chasms occasioned by subterraneous convulsions;

not to mention how many men are lost by casualties, which, by the frequency of their occurrence, cease to surprise; how many are drowned in seas and rivers, how many destroyed by poison, by falling, by other accidents.

Why should those who are obnoxious to so many calamities, go voluntarily in quest of an adscititious evil, as if the measure of misery required to be full to the very brim, and to run over; in quest of an evil, *not a common evil*, but *an evil, of all human evils, the worst and the foulest;* so destructive an evil, that alone, it exceeds them all in mischief; so abundant in misery, that it comprehends every kind of wretchedness within itself; so pestilential in its nature, that it loads men with *guilt* in proportion as it galls them with *woe*.

To these considerations add, that the advantages derived from *peace* diffuse themselves far and wide, and reach *great numbers*, while in *war*, if any thing turns out happily, (though, O my God! what can ever deserve the appellation of *happy* in war!) the advantage redounds only to a *few*, and those unworthy of reaping it. One man's safety is owing to the destruction of another. One man's prize derived from the plunder of another. The cause of rejoicings made by one side, is to the other a cause of mourning. Whatever is unfortunate in war, is severely so indeed, and whatever, on the contrary, is called *good fortune*, is a *savage and a cruel good fortune*, an ungenerous happiness, deriving its existence from another's woe. Indeed, at the conclusion, it commonly happens, that both sides, the victorious and the vanquished, have cause to deplore. I know not

whether any war ever succeeded so fortunately in all its events, but that the conqueror, if he had a heart to feel, or an understanding to judge, as he ought to do, repented that he ever engaged in it at all.

Therefore, since peace is confessedly of all things the best and the happiest, and war, on the contrary, appears to be attended with the greatest possible distress of every kind, and the blackest villainy of which human nature is capable, can we think those men of sound mind or honest hearts, who, when they might enjoy the blessings of peace with little trouble, merely by negociation, go out of their way, rush headlong into every difficulty and danger, to involve a whole people in the horrors of war!

I say nothing of the constant state of fear and alarm, in which the people live: I say nothing of the real danger to which they are perpetually exposed. Such is the uncertainty of war, that what is there not to be feared in it? who can enumerate the inconveniences and hardships, which they who foolishly go to war, endure in a camp: exposed to every bitter blast that blows, and often without even a tent to shelter their cold limbs from the wind and the weather! They must continue all night, as well as day, in the open air; they must lie on the ground; they must stand in their arms; they must bear hunger, cold, heat, dust, rain: after all these hardships comes the dreadful signal for engagement! To *death* they must go! They must either *slay without mercy*, or *fall without pity!*

Such and so great are the evils which are submitted to, in order to accomplish an end, itself a greater evil than all that have preceded in preparation for it. We thus afflict ourselves for the noble

end of enabling ourselves to afflict others. If we were to calculate the matter fairly, and form a just computation of the cost attending war, and that of procuring peace, we should find that peace might be purchased at a tenth part of the cares, labours, troubles, dangers, expenses, and blood, which it costs to carry on a war. You lead a vast multitude of men into danger of losing their lives in order to demolish some great city; while the same labour and fatigue of these very men would build, without any danger, a more magnificent city, than the city doomed to demolition. But the object is to do all possible injury to an enemy. A most inhuman object, let me tell you! and consider, whether you can hurt him, essentially, without hurting, at the same time, and by the same means, your own People. It surely is to act like a madman to take to yourself so large a portion of certain evil, when it must ever be uncertain how the die of War may fall in the ultimate issue.

BUT grant that the *Heathens* might be hurried into all this madness and folly, by anger, by ambition, by avarice, by cruelty, yet how could it ever enter into our hearts, that a CHRISTIAN should embrue his hands in the blood of a Christian! If a brother murder his brother, the crime is called Fratricide: but a Christian is more closely allied to a Christian as such, than a brother by the ties of consanguinity; unless the bonds of nature are stronger than the bonds of Christ, which Christians, consistently with their faith, cannot allow. How absurd then is it, that they should be constantly at war with each other, who form but one family, the church of Christ; who are

members of the same body; who boast of the same head, even Jesus Christ; who have one Father in Heaven, common to them all; who grow in grace by the same Spirit; who have one common enemy, the Devil, and are all called to the same eternal inheritance.

Where are there so many and so sacred obligations to perfect concord, as in the Christian religion? Where so numerous exhortations to peace? One law Jesus Christ claimed as his own peculiar law, and it was *the law of love, or charity.* What practice among mankind violates this law so grossly as war? Christ salutes his votaries with the happy omen of *peace.* To his disciples he gives nothing but *peace;* he leaves them no other legacy but *peace.* In his holy prayers, the subject of his devout entreaty was principally, that, as He was one with the Father, so his disciples, (that is to say, all Christians,) might be one with Him. This union is something more than peace, more than friendship, more than concord, it is an intimate communion with the Divine nature.

Solomon was a type of Christ. But the word Solomon in Hebrew signifies the *pacific.* Solomon, on this account, because he was pacific, was chosen to build the temple. David was rejected as a builder of the temple, because he was a warrior. He was rejected for this, though the wars he carried on, were against the wicked, and at the command of God; and though he, who afterwards abrogated, in great measure, the laws of Moses, had not yet taught mankind that they ought to love their enemies.

At the nativity of Jesus Christ, the angels sung not the glories of war, nor a song of triumph, but a hymn of peace. "Glory to God in the highest, "on earth, PEACE; good will towards men."

The mystic poet and prophet foretold before his birth,

Factus est *in pace* locus ejus,
Psalm lxxvi. 2.

"In the CITY OF PEACE (Salem) he made his "dwelling-place: there brake he the arrows of "the bow, the shield, the sword, and the battle-"axe."

"He shall refrain the spirit of Princes; he "is terrible to the Kings of the earth."

Examine every part of his doctrine, you will find nothing that does not breathe peace, speak the language of love, and savour of charity: and as he knew that peace could not be preserved unless those objects, for which the world contends with the sword's point, were considered as vile and contemptible, he ordered us to learn of him to be meek and lowly. He pronounced those happy, who held riches and the daughters of riches, Pomp and Pride, in no esteem; for these he calls the poor in spirit, and these he has blessed. He pronounced those happy, who despised the pleasures of the world; for he says, blessed are the mourners; even they who patiently suffered themselves to be extruded from their possessions, knowing that our place of residence on earth is a place of exile, and that our true country and our best riches are in heaven. He pronounced those happy, who, while deserving well of all, should be evil-spoken of, and persecuted with ill-usage. He prohibited resistance of evil. In short, as the whole of his doctrine recommended forbearance and love, so his life taught nothing but mildness, gentleness, and kind affection. Such was his reign; thus did *he* wage war, thus he conquered, and thus he triumphed. Nor do the apostles in-

culcate any other doctrine; they who had imbibed the purest spirit of Christ and were filled with sacred draughts from the fountain head. What do all the epistles of St. Paul resound with, but PEACE, but long suffering, but Charity? What does St. John speak of, and repeat continually, but Christian Love? What else St. Peter? what else all writers in the world who are truly Christian?

Whence then the tumults of War among the Children of peace? Is it a mere fable, when Christ calls himself the vine, and his disciples the branches? Who can conceive a branch divided against a branch of the same tree? Or is it an unmeaning assertion, which St. Paul has repeatedly made that the Church is one body, united in its many members, and adherring to one head, Jesus Christ? Who ever beheld the eye contending with the hand, or the belly fighting against the foot? In the whole universe, consisting of parts so discordant, there still continues a general harmony. In the animal body there is peace among all the members, and with whatever excellence one member is endowed, it confines not the benefit to itself, but communicates it to all. If any evil happen to one member, the whole body affords it assistance. Can then the mere animal connexion of nature in a material body, formed soon to perish, effect more in preserving harmony, than the union of the spirit in a mystical and immortal body? Is it without meaning that we pray, according to the command of Christ, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven? In the Kingdom of Heaven there is perfect concord. But Christ intended that his Church should be nothing less than a Celestial Community; a Heaven upon Earth;

men who belong to it, living, as much as possible, according to the model of the Heavenly kingdom, hastening thither, and feeling and acknowledging their whole dependance upon it for present and future felicity.

Come then, and let us picture in imagination some stranger; let us suppose him just arrived at this world of ours, and desirous of knowing what is going on here: and when he has been informed of the various living creatures upon its surface, let him be told that there is one animal wonderfully composed of two distinct parts; of a body which he possesses in common with the brutes: of a mind which bears a semblance of the Divine Mind; that he is so noble in his nature, that though here in a state of exile, yet he has dominion over all other animals; that he is so dear to the Eternal Deity, that, since he was unable, either by the powers of nature, or the deductions of philosophy, to reach the excellence at which he aspired, the Eternal Deity, delegated his own Son to bring to him from Heaven a new doctrine. Then, after the Stranger should have heard the whole life of Christ, and become perfectly acquainted with his law and precepts, let us suppose him to ascend some lofty pinnacle, whence he might see with his own eyes the things which he had heard by report concerning this noble animal, *rational*, *Christian*, *immortal man*. When he should have seen all other animals living at peace with their own kind, guided by the laws of nature, and desiring nothing but what nature taught them to desire: but at the same time observed, that there was one animal, trafficking dishonestly, intriguing treacherously, quarrelling and waging war with its own kind;

would he not be apt to suspect any of the other animals to be man, of whom he had heard so much, rather than that two-legged creature which is really man; thus perverted, as he would appear, from the state in which God made, and to which Christ came to restore him?

It may now be worth while to observe in what manner Christians defend the madness of war.

If, say they, war had been absolutely unlawful, God would not have excited the Jews to wage war against their enemies. I hear the argument, and observe upon it, that the objector should in justice add, that the Jews scarcely ever waged war, as the Christians do, against each other, but against aliens and infidels. We Christians draw the sword against Christians. To them, a difference in religion, and the worship of strange Gods, was the source of contest. We are urged to war either by childish anger, or a hunger and thirst for riches and glory, and oftentimes merely for base and filthy Lucre. They fought at the express command of God; we, at the command of our own passions.

But since the time that Jesus Christ said, Put up thy sword into its scabbard, Christians ought not to go to war; unless it be in that most honourable warfare, with the vilest enemies of the Church, the inordinate love of money, anger, and ambition. These are our *Philistines*, these our *Nabuchodonosars*, these our *Moabites* and *Ammonites*, with whom we ought never to make a truce; with these we must engage without intermission till the enemy being utterly extirpated, peace may be firmly established. Unless we subdue such enemies as these, we can neither have peace with ourselves, nor

peace with any one else. *This is the only war which tends to produce a real and a lasting peace.* He, who shall have once conquered foes like these, will never wish to wage war with any mortal man upon the face of that earth, on which God placed all men to live, to let live, and to enjoy the life he gave.

I lay no stress on the opinion of those who interpret the two swords given to Peter to mean two powers, the civil and ecclesiastical, claimed by the successors of Peter, since Christ suffered Peter himself to fall into an error in this matter, on purpose that, when he had put up his sword it might remain no longer a doubt, that war was prohibited; which, before that order, had been considered as allowable. But Peter, they allege, did actually use his sword. It is true he did; but while he was still a Jew, and had not yet received the genuine spirit of Christianity. He used his sword, not in support of any disputable claim to property, not to defend goods, chattels, lands, and estates, as we do; nor yet for his own life, but for the life of his Lord and Master. *Let it also be remembered, that he who used the sword in defence of his master, very soon after denied and renounced that master.* If Peter is to be our model, and if we are so much pleased with the example of Peter *fighting* for Christ, we may probably approve also the example of Peter *denying* Christ.

Peter, in using his sword, only made a slip in consequence of the impulse of a sudden passion, yet he was reprimanded. But if Chirst approved this mode of defence, as some most absurdly infer from this transaction, how happens it that the uniform tenour of his whole life and doctrine teaches nothing else but forbearance? Why,

when he commissioned his disciples, did he expose them to the despots of the world, armed only with a walking-stick and a wallet—a staff and a scrip? If by that sword, which Christ ordered them, after selling every thing else, to buy, is meant a moderate defence against persecution, as some men ignorantly interpret it, how came it to pass that the Martyrs never used it?

But they urge, that the laws of nature, the laws of society, and the laws of custom and usage, conspire in dictating the propriety of repelling force by force, and defending life, and money too, which is to some persons as dear as life. So much I allow. But Gospel Grace, of more force than all these laws, declares in decisive words, that those who revile us, we must not revile again, that we must do good to them who use us ill; and that we should also pray for them who design to take away our lives. All this, they tell us, had a particular reference to the apostles; but I contend that it also refers to all Christian people, to the whole body, which should be entire and perfect, though one member may have been formerly distinguished by some particular pre-eminence. The doctrine of Christ can, indeed, have no reference to them, who do not expect their reward with Christ. Let those draw swords for money, for land, and for power, who laugh at Christ's saying, that the poor in spirit were the happy men; that is, that those were the truly rich, who desired none of this world's riches or honours. They who place the chief good in things like these, fight for their lives, but then they are of that description of persons, who are not sensible that this life is a kind of death, and that to the

godly there is provided a treasure in heaven, a happy immortality.

But they proceed to argue, that as it is lawful to inflict punishment on an individual delinquent, it must also be lawful to take vengeance on an offending State. The full answer to be given to this argument would involve me in greater prolixity than is now requisite. I will only say, that the two cases differ widely in this respect. He who is convicted *judicially*, suffers the punishment which the *laws* impose: but in *war*, each side treats the other side as *guilty*, and proceeds to inflict punishment, regardless of law, judge, or jury. In the former case, the evil only falls on him who committed the wrong: the benefit of the example redounds to all; in the latter case the greatest part of the very numerous evils falls on those who deserve no evil at all, on husbandmen, on old people, on mothers of families, on orphans, and on defenceless young females. But if any good at all can be gathered from a thing which is itself the worst of all things, the whole of that good devolves to the share of a few most profligate robbers, to the mercenary pillager, to the piratical privateer. It would be better to let the crime of a few go unpunished, than, while we endeavour to chastise one or two by war, in which, perhaps, we may not succeed, to involve our own people, the neighbouring people, and the innocent part of the enemies, (for so I may call the multitude,) in certain calamity. It is better to let a wound alone, which cannot be healed without injury to the whole body. But if any one should exclaim, "that it would be unjust "that he who has offended should not suffer "condign punishment;" I answer, that it is much more unjust, that so many thousand innocent

persons should be called to share the utmost extremity of misfortune which they could not possibly have deserved.

But the objector repeats, "Why may I not "go and cut the throats of those who would cut "our throats if they could?" Do you then consider it as a disgrace that any should be wickeder than you? Why do you not go and rob thieves? they would rob you if they could. Why do you not revile them that revile you? Why do you not hate them that hate you?

Do you consider it as a noble exploit for a Christian, having killed in war those whom he thinks wicked, but who still are men, for whom Christ died, thus to offer up victims most acceptable to the Devil, and to delight that grand enemy in two instances; first, that a man is slain at all, and secondly, that the man who slew him is a Christian?

If we are willing to conquer for Christ, let us buckle on the sword of the gospel; let us put on the helmet of salvation, grasp the shield of faith, and be completely clad in apostolical armour, the panoply of heaven. Then will it come to pass, that we shall triumph even in defeat, and when routed in the field, still bear away the palm of a most glorious victory. If we endeavour to be what we are called, that is, to be violently attached to nothing worldly, to seek nothing here with too anxious a solicitude; if we endeavor to free ourselves from all that may incumber and impede our flight to heaven; if we aspire with our most ardent wishes at celestial felicity; if we place our chief happiness in Christ alone;—we have certainly, in so doing, made up our minds to believe, that whatever is truly good, truly great, truly delightful, is to be found in his religion. If we are

convinced that a good man cannot be essentially hurt by any mortal, if we have duly estimated the vanity and transitory duration of all the ridiculous things which agitate human beings, if we have an adequate idea of being so cleansed, by continual meditation, from the pollutions of this world, that when the body is laid down in the dust, one may emigrate to the society of angels: in a word, if we exhibit these three qualities, without which no man can deserve the appellation of a Christian: *Innocence*, that we may be free from vice; *Charity*, that we may deserve well of all men; *Patience*, that we may bear with those that use us ill, and, if possible, bury injuries by an accumulation of benefits on the injured party; I ask what war can possibly arise hereafter for any trifles which the world contains?

If the Christian religion be a fable, why do we not honestly and openly explode it? Why do we glory and take a pride in its name? But if Christ is both "the way, and the truth, and the "life," why do all our schemes of life and plans of conduct deviate so from this great Exemplar? If we acknowledge Christ to be our Lord and Master, who is Love itself, and who taught nothing but love and peace, let us exhibit his model, not by assuming his name, but by our lives and conversation. Let us adopt the love of peace, that Christ may recognise his own, even as we recognise him to be the Teacher of Peace.

Extract from a Letter addressed by Erasmus to Francis the First, King of France,

Anno 1523.

What can be frailer, more transitory, more exposed to misery, than human life? I dwell not on the great variety of diseases, disasters, accidents, fatal calamities, pestilent sicknesses, lightning, earthquakes, conflagrations, inundations, and other evils which overwhelm it, without limit and without number. Yet, among all the miseries by which man is infested, there is not one more malignant, more mischievous, than WAR; not one that, like WAR, does more harm to the *morals* of men, than even to their *property* and *persons*. It is indeed a less injury to deprive me of my life, than of my innocence. Nor is war at all the less detestable, because the greatest portion of its evils fall on the poor and low, on the farmer, the manufacturer, or the wayfaring-man. Our Lord Jesus Christ shed his blood for the redemption of these men, despised as they are, no less than for the redemption of Kings. And when we shall stand before the judgment seat of Christ, where the most powerful Lords of this world must shortly stand, that impartial Judge will require a no less strict account to be given of those poor and despised ones, than of Despots and Grandees.

Therefore they who deem it a trifling loss and injury, when the poor and the low are robbed, afflicted, banished, burnt out, oppressed, or put to death, do in truth accuse Jesus Christ, (the wisdom of the Father,) of folly, for shedding his blood to save such wretches as these.

Christ, throughout his whole life, displayed the character of a Saviour, a Comforter, an universal Benefactor. Whether in the temple or the synagogue, whether in public or in private, whether in a ship or in the wilderness, he taught the multitude, he healed the sick, he cleansed the lepers, he restored the paralytic, the lame, the blind, he expelled evil spirits, he raised the dead, he delivered those that were in jeopardy, he fed the hungry, he refuted the Pharisees, he took the part of the disciples, of the poor sinful creature who so lavishly poured out her ointment, he even comforted the guilty and unhappy woman of Canaan, who was detected in the commission of her crime. Review the whole life of Jesus; he never did evil to any mortal, though he was himself used so ill, and if he had chosen it, might have revenged himself so amply. He was uniformly the Saviour and the Benefactor. To Malchus he restored the ear which Peter had cut off. He would not suffer his own personal safety to be secured, even by so trifling an injury as that which was done to Malchus. Suspended on the cross, he saved one of the thieves that were crucified with him. After his death he brought over the Centurion to the Christian faith. This was supporting the character of a King, truly so called—*To do good to all, and injury to none.*

If ever there was an opportunity for good shepherds to consult the good of their flocks at the hazard or loss of their lives: if ever there was an

occasion for treading in the steps of that great Shepherd, whose successors they pretend to be; it is now, at this moment, when such an inundation of crimes and calamities, the consequences of war, is deluging the globe. Out of such a multitude of Abbots, Bishops, Archbishops, Cardinals, why does not a single individual stand forward, even at the risk of his life, to tranquillize the tumult of war? How happily and honourably would he die, who should forfeit his life in the endeavour to preserve so many thousand lives as must perish by war?

Nothing can be more cruel and savage than single combats, and the butchery of gladiatorial spectacles; and yet our forefathers were so delighted with the sight, that an example, the basest of all others, left us by the heathens, took such firm hold of the Christians, especially in the city of Rome, that they have not been able at this day to divest themselve entirely of this relic of paganism. The abolition of that species of combat, which they distinguish by the name of *tripartite*, we owe to one Telemachus, a person of that order, who formerly, on account of the simplicity of a truly Christian life, a love of solitude, and an aversion to the pollusions of the world, were commonly called monks or hermits. This good man left the East, and came to Rome, where entering the theatre, and seeing armed men rushing violently with an intent to kill each other, he leaped into the midst of them, exclaiming "What "are you doing, brothers? why do you run head-"long, like two wild beasts, to each other's destruction?" In short, while the good-natured man was humanely endeavouring to save the lives of the combatants, he lost his own; for the people stoned him to death, so highly did the unthinking

rabble value this cruel diversion, which afforded an object to stare at. What was the consequence? The emperor Honorius, as soon as he heard of the transaction, issued orders to abolish the exhibition of gladiatorial combats. Now reflect a moment with me, how base an amusement this was, how many thousand lives were lost by it; and you will immediately see how much the world is indebted to the death of an individual.*** Kings engage in wars with one another, to the infinite detriment of *all the world*; yet they may perhaps be separated and pacified at a less hazard than that with which Telemachus parted the gladiators. For they are confessedly *Christians;* and in proportion as their natures are more noble, they are the more manageable. If any Bishop, or any one else invested with the authority of the gospel, would deal with them with sound arguments, and speak to their consciences by sincere remonstrances, and if a good man, daring to attempt so noble an enterprise, should happen to fall into the hands of some merciless and cruel prince, the worst he could suffer from the most savage of the whole herd, would be death. And on what occasion will those persons exhibit a pattern of the apostolical spirit, who pretend that they have succeeded to the apostolical authority, if they do not exhibit it on such an occasion?

If the tumult of war appeared but rarely, like a deluge, an earthquake, or a famine, it might be borne with more patience. But, on the contrary, the whole world is agitated with contests and disputes, terminating in all the miseries of war, without end, and without measure.

It is usual with physicians, when any new disease appears, to investigate with great sagacity the causes of it, and when they have found

the cause, they easily complete the cure; not satisfied with this discovery, and this success, their next endeavour is to *devise methods for preventing the return of the disease.* Now, how happens it in *political* evils, so important, and of so frequent recurrence, men of sense and experience, do not endeavour to trace the origin of evils that infest the whole world, that they may cut them up by the root, and put an end to the calamity? How happens it, that in matters of smaller moment, we are so sharp-sighted, and so blind in an affair of the very first consequence?

I form not my estimate of a true Christian from the articles of his creed, but from his morals. Wherever ambition, avarice, pride anger, revenge, and a desire of doing mischief to others, bear sway; there, I conclude, is no gospel faith, no true Christianity.

But while this corruption has seized those whose principal business it was to have cured the corruption of others, I derive some good hopes from observing sacred literature, but especially the New Testament, to be so diligently and habitually studied by all, but especially the common people; that those whose profession leads them to a particular knowledge of holy writ, often appear inferior to the common people in conversation upon it. It is a proof, in my opinion, that the New Testament is very much read, that, though the press sends forth many thousand copies of it every year, yet the booksellers' shops, numerous as they are, cannot furnish enough to satisfy the avidity of the purchasers. Whatever any one writes on the gospel, is at present a very saleable commodity. Now, a medicine so efficacious cannot be universally taken, without producing in time

a very powerful effect on the public minds and morals*

The world, therefore, appears to me at present to be affected like the human body, when it has taken some powerful physic for the cure of an inveterate disease; the whole frame is shaken, the whole system disordered, and even death seems to be approaching. And I wish this *evangelical medicine*, after it has searched and penetrated every vein of our hearts, may throw off all the seeds of evil, and restore us, perfectly cleansed and completely cured, to Jesus Christ. May it, after the feverish tumult which has caused the diseases under which the world laboured, to appear desperate, restore to mankind a delightful and long-wished repose!

But I should be the more inclined to indulge hopes of this kind, in which all the world unites with me, if the men who are at the head of human affairs would, like faithful physicians, duly attend to the states of a sick world; that is, if Kings, upon whose will the affairs of poor mortals in the present state principally depend, would remember

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* If Erasmus, so far back as the sixteenth century, anticipated effects so truly happy from the unrestrained examination of the HOLY SCRIPTURES. what a glorious hope unfolds itself to Christians in the *present day*, when those Scripturs are *so much more generally* circulated among all classes, and when education is co-operating to make them familiar to every one! Many rejoice, with Erasmus, in the persuasion that an unreserved adoption of Gospel principles would utterly abrogate war among Christians; and as the object of the BIBLE SOCIETY is the universal diffusion of the gospel, it is not unreasonable to hope that it will be made a powerful agent in accomplishing that cheering prophecy which promises an era, when "Nation shall not lift up sword against nation," when the people "shall not *learn* WAR any more."

that they must very soon (for what is there of long duration in this world?) give an account of their administration to Christ the King of Kings. In the next place, that Bishops, Divines, and all the inferior Churchmen would remember, that they are not successors of *Annas* and *Caiaphas*, of the *Scribes* or the *Pharisees*, who while they impiously endeavoured to preserve their own power, did all they could to crush the gospel; while they asserted their own glory, laboured to sully the glory of Christ, while they attempted to make an ostentatious display of their own righteousness, made God himself unrighteous: —but that they are rather the successors of the *Apostles*, who, even at the expence of their blood, took delight in asserting the kingdom of Christ, his glory, and his righteousness.

Christ suffered once; he rose again to life, no more to die: but the same sufferings which he once underwent, he undergoes afresh, as often as gospel truth is condemned, spit upon, beaten, crucified, and buried; in a word, whatever evil is inflicted on any one of his members, he deems inflicted on himself, the Head of the body.

I pray, therefore, Jesus the immortal King of the whole world, to whom all power is given from God in heaven and in earth, that he would impart his Spirit not only to all people, but to all Kings; to all *Kings*, that they may live in unity, and consequently in happiness, one with another, under their common King, Lord, and Saviour; and to all *people*, that under monarchs at once pious, holy, and prosperous, they may enjoy peace; that by these means, and not by invading and laying waste the territories of others, which only makes them poorer and not better, evangelical piety, once firmly established,

may be diffused far and wide; that evangelical philosophy may be every where preached with sincerity of heart, by men endowed with the true evangelical spirit; and that we may live so, that the sweet fragrance of our piety may allure great multitudes to the sincere profession of the same religion.

Thus was the reign of the Gospel first begun, thus it increased, thus it was extended, thus it was established. By different measures, we see it reduced to narrow limits, almost exploded, if we consider the desolation spread through the world by war. By the same aids by which it began, increased, and became established, we ought to restore it where it is fallen, to extend it where its limits are contracted; and to fix it firmly where it is tottering on its base.

FINIS.

W. & S. Graves, Printers,
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OBSERVATIONS

ON

THE EFFICACY

AND

UNIVERSALITY

OF

THE GRACE OF GOD.

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OBSERVATIONS, &c.

I AM renewedly confirmed in a sentiment I have long been settled in; which is, that there never was, and never will be, but one true religion in the world; to wit, *The work of the Spirit of God, in the souls of mankind*: that some of all denominations have something of this True Religion, even though some of them, through the prejudice of education, may disallow it in profession: and that no man has any real religion but what he comes to the knowledge and experience of, through the influence of this Holy Spirit. This it is that begins and carries on the work: this it is that, by its own divine influence operating in the minds of mankind, reveals Christ in them, "the hope of glory*;" or, so operates from time to time, on reading the Scriptures, or other good books, on hearing the gospel preached, on meditating on the works of creation and providence, on God's judgments in the earth, or his dealings with themselves as individuals; or whatever other occasion, circumstance, or thing, is ever made a mean of conviction or conversion; the Holy Spirit so operates, I say, in all these cases, as to produce the happy effect: and without the inward operation thereof, all these other opportunities and things would be utterly in vain, as to salvation, and never able to produce the least degree of true religion or sanctification in the soul. So that, though there are many opinions, many creeds, professions, and denominations, and some truly religious persons in them all; yet there is, and can be but one

* Col. i. 27.

TRUE RELIGION: all true religion is of one kind; all springs from one source. And, blessed and adored for ever be the Lord, in order that all men may, if they will, be benefited experimentally by this one true religion, "the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal*." He that rightly profits thereby, and continues so to do, will live in the exercise of the one true faith, will witness the one true Christian baptism, will know and obey the one Living God, will, by the Holy Ghost, in word and deed acknowledge and call him Lord, and so will be saved with an everlasting salvation. And on the other hand, seeing a measure of the Holy Spirit is given to every man; seeing "the Grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men†;" seeing the light and life of the Holy Word, which in the beginning was with God, and was God, hath enlightened "every man that cometh into the world‡;" and seeing, moreover, Christ Jesus hath tasted "death for every man‖;" how shall we escape if we neglect and reject so great salvation? How great must be the condemnation of every soul, thus highly favoured, which yet stands out and rejects the strivings of the Spirit, the teachings of Grace, the shinings and convictions of this divine Light!

Now this Light, Grace, and Spirit of God, is all one, under different appellations. It is called Spirit, because it is quick, lively, and operative, and quickens the soul to a sensibility of its state and condition; it is called Grace, because it is the free, unmerited gift of God; and it is called Light, because it makes manifest; as "whatsoever doth make manifest, is Light§," say the Scriptures. And as this Grace or Light is attended to, it will bring the soul into a state of grace and favour

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* 1 Cor. xii. 7. † Tit. ii. 11. ‡ John, i. 9.
‖ Heb. ii. 9. § Eph. v. 13.

with God. Well, therefore, might the Apostle, with holy reverence, break forth in these expressions, "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift*!" And all who obey the Light will be brought out of darkness into his marvellous Light; for though the hearts of fallen men are grossly darkened, yet the Light shineth in their dark hearts; and though the darkness comprehendeth it not, if it is taken heed unto, it will shine more and more unto the perfect day; even until the whole body be full of light. But those who rebel against the Light, will grow darker and darker, until they know not the way thereof, nor understand the paths thereof; and become vain in their imaginations, and their foolish hearts become darkened; having loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.—*Extracted from the Journal of* JOB SCOTT, *page* 226—229.

THE working and striving of God by his most blessed Spirit in the souls of men, in order to their repentance and reformation, is not irresistible, but suited to man's rational nature and freedom of choice and action. For man is not a necessary agent, (if I may so speak,) but a free agent; and therefore he is an accountable creature for his conduct and behaviour in this world; and for that reason he becomes a proper object of rewards and punishments in the next life, according as his works have been in this.

For if we were necessary agents, or agents whose actions were not free and voluntary, but were forced irresistibly to action, by an irrevocable decree of the Almighty God, or by his pre-ordination, we should be like mere stocks or stones in his hand, and move as the orbs in the planetary

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* 2 Cor. ix, 15.

system, without the least liberty or choice of action; and therefore should be entirely unaccountable for any and even all the base, irreligious and most inhuman actions which we do, or can do; and no reward or punishment could in justice or reason be due to us for any good or bad actions.

Religion would indeed then be what the irreligious seem to desire it should be, namely, a mere sham or nullity.

For to what purpose, and how preposterous would it be, to call men to repentance and amendment of life, when at the same time they have no need of repentance? since they are all doing his will, and cannot help it; all obedient to his preordination, because it was impossible for them to withstand the irresistible force of the Almighty. So that this hypothesis, in my opinion, tends directly to an utter abolishing of the notions of virtue and vice, and to extirpate the same out of the minds of mankind.

But Almighty God hath not impelled us with such an irresistible force to either bad or good actions; as our own experience, as well as reason fully evince: for we feel he hath given us a liberty and freedom to choose or refuse good or evil actions; to turn our thoughts hither and thither, from one object to another, and change our actions at pleasure, so that whatsoever liberty and power we lost in Adam, regarding divine things, we may regain by Jesus Christ.

True it is, man considered in Adam in the fall, abstractedly, is a very weak and impotent creature regarding God and spiritual things, and can do nothing in that respect without Christ or his divine help: but man considered as the purchase of the beloved Son of God, to whom as such He gives light and power, can by virtue thereof, do all things necessary for pleasing and serving God acceptably.

And therefore it is but reasonable, that we should account for our actions to him, and receive a just retribution from him in a future state, according to our works in this world, whether they shall be good or bad; which the revelations of the will of God, contained in that holy book, the Bible, give a clear and evident account of: so that there is nothing in this state of trial and probation, that men ought to be more solicitous about, than to please God by walking in his ways, and doing his will and commandments.

And the Spirit of God also beareth witness in the hearts of men to his will, so plainly and experimentally, that I conceive it to be impossible for any sober men, who retire their minds from the creatures and things without them, and empty their souls of all earthly ideas, and then fix and stay their hearts and thoughts on God, steadily waiting on him, and humbly walking with him, in a holy and daily self-denial and cross to their carnal and sinful appetites and passions, which they have power from Jesus Christ to do; I say, I take it to be impossible for souls so disposed, and given up to the divine will, trusting in the Lord Jehovah, to miss or fall short of a sense and feeling in themselves, of the experimental work and evidence of God's Spirit in their souls; to enlighten them in a sweet and blessed manner concerning his will, and what he requires of them; (consonant to the doctrine of the Gospel;) and witnessing the truths contained in the Bible, as coming from God, through his inspiration of those holy men who spake them.

And such men, so turned and enlightened, cannot fail of feeling in their hearts a being quickened and strengthened to holy and pious actions, to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this world. In such souls an abhorrence is begotten to vile and evil actions, as a shame to human nature as well

as an offence to the Almighty as an unmanly and brutal course of life, and therefore very displeasing to Him who made us men, that we should live like men, and as becomes rational creatures, and not as brute beasts, below our rational nature; but behaving ourselves to our own honour as well as his.

For every evil and sinful act is an irrational act; every excessive and disorderly appetite and passion is a marring and abusing of the man who gives way to it; bringing shame upon him in the opinion of others, and which he cannot but be ashamed of himself, when he thinks like a man, when he looks back on his actions, and reflects as becomes a rational creature. The apostle might therefore very well ask enlightened and quickened souls, "what fruit [or profit] had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed *?"

For as there is both light and quickening virtue, in the rays and beams of the outward sun, in the outward firmament; so there is both light and quickening virtue in the rays and beams of the inward and divine Sun of the soul, (called in scripture "the Sun of Righteousness †,") in the inward firmament of God's power in the heart.

And where is even the earthly-minded man, that at some time or other doth not meet with a visitation of God within his own soul, though unsought after by him, that sets his sins in order before him, and pricks him to the very heart for the same? This is the day of God to the soul: this is the time in which His Spirit strives with man for his redemption and salvation from sin. This is the season in which He would gather the soul to himself, "as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings ‡."

But if men will not be so gathered, if they will have their own ways, and not God's ways; (for

* Rom. vi. 21. † Mal. iv. 2. ‡ Matt. xxiii. 37.

they have their choice;) then their souls will become desolate, and their condemnation will be just: for, " This," said our Saviour, " is the condemnation, that light is come into the world," into the hearts of sensual, sinful, and worldly-minded men, " and men," such corrupt men, " loved darkness," their dark and wicked ways, " rather than light," than the light of God in their hearts, " because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil, hateth the light, neither cometh to the light," (though the light at certain times cometh to him,) " lest his deeds should be reproved (or discovered)*;" which he does not like to see, and feel in himself reproof and condemnation for.

Until therefore this light in the soul, is come to by men, its coming to them, is not likely to reform them. Nothing will ever reform the sinful and degenerate world, but their coming to the light and walking in it. Men may, and some even do, make a fair show in the world, which will prove but like the morning dew, if they do not come to the Spirit, and bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, as the effects of a vital and living principle in the soul.

The light of God is come to men universally, for Christ is the " true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world†." And oh! that men would as universally come to the divine light! by abstracting their thoughts and minds very frequently from the creatures and things of this world around them—come to wait upon and attend to the illuminations of this light, and to be enlivened in their souls to a heavenly love; to the true and real love of God, and the things that belong to their everlasting peace and salvation.

God will then give us as much strength as we

* John, iii. 19, 20. † John, i. 9.

want, if we do actually and indeed truly trust in Him, who is the Lord Jehovah, in whom there is " everlasting strength*;" if we yield ourselves to him, and the faculties and powers of our souls as " instruments of righteousness unto him†." For we ourselves must co-operate in our own salvation, and in working it out " with fear and trembling‡;" with a real consciousness and care of our actions; with fear of offending him, and with trembling at his word. And in order to our help therein, he will work in us " to will and to do of his good pleasure§:" he will strengthen us " with might, by his Spirit in the inner man‖."

And it is in vain for us to expect the coming of the kingdom of God in our souls, as a dominant and ruling power there, if we keep our hearts from him, and will have our own will and ways; " will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel**," and be contented with a name to live, while we remain dead in trespasses and sins. For it is doing the will of God on earth, as it is done in heaven, that qualifies us for witnesses of the coming of his kingdom " with power††" to rule in our hearts; for God will not save us, and take to his rule and reign in us against our wills, but with our wills; he will be sought unto by us for his wonderful favour, we must yield ourselves to him, in order to become subjects of his kingdom of grace here, that we may become fit for his kingdom of glory hereafter.

In which blessed yielding ourselves to God, we shall in a very heavenly manner, be delighted with the fruition of his luminous presence, and overcoming love and goodness in our hearts and souls, in his service here on earth, and be assured beyond all hesitation and doubt whatsoever, that if we

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* Isa. xxvi. 4. † Rom. vi. 13. ‡ Phil. ii. 12.
§ Phil. ii. 13. ‖ Eph. iii. 16 ** Isa. iv. 1. †† Mark, ix. 1.

persevere in his will and way to the end, we shall not miss a crown of righteousness in the kingdom and world to come, to all eternity. These are things truly worth minding, when all the things of this world, in comparison of them, are but empty and insignificant appearances, that perish with the using, that will stay with us, or we with them, but for a moment; when the love of God, and the peace and joy of the Holy Ghost will never fail us, as we habituate ourselves to walk uprightly with him, and do his commandments in this life, and will in the end lead us forth into an ocean of divine love for ever and ever.—*Extracted from "An Essay concerning the restoration of Primitive Christianity, in a conduct truly pious and religious, by* THOMAS BEAVEN," *p.* 72—82.

To conclude:—Obedience to the impression which God makes upon our souls, of his will and mind, is religion and true Christianity—is the conduct that we ought to be found in, in order to be happy here and hereafter. It is not submitting ourselves to the decrees, determinations, and dictates of fallible men, to the rites, ceremonies, and injunctions of men, in relation to externals: but a depending on, and compliance with, the internal light, operations, and injunctions of the Divine Spirit in the soul, having the powers and capacities of the soul dilated and laid open to the influence of heaven, by an upright application to God, and waiting on Him with a mind sequestered from this world and visible objects; with a mind and heart seeking "the kingdom of God and his righteousness *," following Christ "in the regeneration †," and doing whatsoever he commandeth ‡.

As every man must "give account of himself to

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* Matt. vi. 33. † Matt. xix. 28. ‡ John xv. 14.

God *," so let every one of us address ourselves to Him, his Son, and Spirit, and hear what he speaks in us by his blessed Spirit, and what he speaks to us by his sacred Writings, the BIBLE. Let us frequently read these Holy Writings, and as frequently turn our minds to this Holy Spirit; for as holy men of old spake (or wrote) them " as they were moved by the Holy Ghost †," so men of God now can have no adequate knowledge of them, no knowledge of them which is divine and saving, by any other medium, than the same Spirit by which they were written; for as they are the things of God, so no man knows them but by the Spirit of God.

Laying aside therefore the prejudices we may have received by education and tradition, the vicious inclinations and habits of malice, guile, hypocrisy, envy, and evil speaking, let us, as new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, in respect of what He dictates, both without us and within us, that we may grow thereby ‡, that we may be fed and nourished by him unto eternal life. For as our souls are spirits, and want spiritual sustenance, so God alone is that Spirit which can yield it to us: who can bestow upon us " the true bread from heaven §;" and let us not content ourselves with any shadows and figures of it, or any external or bodily service; for it is the labour of the mind, the hunger and thirst of the soul, as influenced by the Divine Spirit, that is the proper qualification for partaking of the " meat which endureth unto everlasting life **."

As mankind come into this exercise of mind so acceptable to God, and profitable to themselves, from a true sense of their spiritual wants, their cries and prayers, in and under the aid and power of his Spirit, will enter into the ears of the Almighty,

* Rom. xiv. 12. † 2 Pet. i. 21. ‡ 1 Pet. ii. 1. 2.
§ John, vi. 32. ** John, vi. 27.

be accepted of him, and meet with suitable returns of comfort and supplies from him. Here ministers will have the heavenly bread to break to the people, they will not feed them with husky notions, with dry discourses, with human compositions; not with words " which man's wisdom teacheth; but which the Holy Ghost teacheth *." As their ministry will spring from God, so it will lead to him; it will not be a dead but living ministry: it will reach to the heart, and tend to raise it into a living sense of his power: it will not hinder the souls of them who are breathing for a greater sensation of " the life of God †" in themselves, but will be a furtherance and help to them in that divine exercise; and ministers and hearers will be " made to drink into one Spirit ‡." They will all " eat the same spiritual meat," and all " drink the same spiritual drink §;" and being fitly framed together, will grow " unto a holy temple in the Lord ‖." In which temple the Lord will dwell, and delight to do good to these souls who are thus fitly framed together in him.

Such souls will know beyond all hesitation, the certainty and reality of the existence of the Deity. They will not only be convinced of that great truth, from clear deductions of reason and scripture, but will feel and witness it by such sensible and delightful manifestations of God in their hearts, as will make them no more to doubt of his presence being there, than they can doubt that the sun shines, when at mid-day, with open eyes, they see its light, and feel its warming influences.

From the same " Essay," p. 158—162.

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* 1 Cor. ii. 13. † Eph. iv. 18. ‡ 1 Cor. xii. 13.
§ 1 Cor. x. 3, 4. ‖ Eph. ii. 21.

FINIS.

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EXTRACTS

FROM

THE WRITINGS OF

William Penn & Richard Claridge,

ON THE

Death and Sufferings

OF

OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

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EXTRACTS

Advertisement.

William Penn and Richard Claridge were eminent characters in the religious Society of Friends. They were men who diligently employed their time, both as Ministers and Authors, in calling the attention of others to the important duties which the Christian religion enjoins. Their views of the benefits of the propitiatory sacrifice of the Son of God for the sins of the whole world, are offered to the reader as sound and scriptural; and it is hoped, that the circulation of them may be attended with advantage to the cause of Christianity.

EXTRACTS,

&c.

WILLIAM PENN, in a pamphlet published in the year 1696, entitled "Primitive Christianity revived, in the faith and practice of the people called Quakers," after asserting that Christ is not the cause, but the effect of God's love, and expressing the belief of the Quakers, "that Christ Jesus was our holy sacrifice, atonement, and propitiation, that he bore our iniquities, and that by his stripes we were healed," &c. proceeds thus:

In short, justification consists of two parts, or hath a two-fold consideration, viz. justification from the guilt of sin, and justification from the power and pollution of sin; and, in this sense, justification gives a man a full and clear acceptance before God. For want of this latter part it is, that so many souls, religiously inclined, are often under doubts, scruples, and despondencies, notwithstanding all that their teachers tell them of the extent and efficacy of the first part of justification. And it is too general an unhappiness among the professors of Christianity, that they are apt to cloak their own active and passive disobedience, with the active and passive obedi-

ence of Christ. The first part of justification, we do reverently and humbly acknowledge, is only for the sake of the death and sufferings of Christ.——It is the power and efficacy of that propitiatory offering, upon faith and repentance, that justifies us upon the sins that are past; and it is the power of Christ's spirit in our hearts, that purifies and makes us acceptable before God. For till the heart of man is purged from sin, God will never accept of it. He reproves, rebukes, and condemns those that entertain sin there, and therefore such cannot be said to be in a justified state; condemnation and justification being contraries; so that they that hold themselves in a justified state, by the active and passive obedience of Christ, while they are not actively and passively obedient to the Spirit of Christ Jesus, are under a strong and dangerous delusion; and for crying out against this sin-pleasing imagination, not to say doctrine, we are reproached as deniers and despisers of the death and sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ. But be it known to such; they add to Christ's sufferings, and crucify to themselves afresh the Son of God, and trample the blood of the covenant under their feet, that walk unholily under a profession of justification; for God will not acquit the guilty, nor justify the disobedient and unfaithful. Such deceive themselves, and at the great and final judgment, their sentence will not be, "*Come ye blessed,*" because it cannot be said to them, "*Well done, good and faithful;*" for they cannot be so esteemed that live and die in a reprovable and condemnable state.

Regeneration we must know, or we cannot be children of God, and heirs of eternal glory, and to be born again, another spirit

and principle must prevail, leaven, season, and govern us, than either the spirit of the world, or our own depraved spirits; and this can be no other spirit than that which dwelt in Christ; for unless that dwell in us, we can be none of his, Rom. viii. 9. And this Spirit begins in conviction, and ends in conversion and perseverance; and the one follows the other: conversion being the consequence of convictions obeyed; and perseverance, a natural fruit of conversion and being born of God; for such sin not, because the seed of God abides in them, 1 John iii. 9. But such, through faithfulness, continue to the end, and obtain the promise, even everlasting life.

But let my reader take this along with him,—That we do acknowledge that Christ, through his holy doing and suffering, (for being a son he learned obedience,) has obtained mercy of God his Father for mankind, and that his obedience has an influence to our salvation, in all the parts and branches of it: since thereby he became a conqueror, and "led captivity captive," and obtained "gifts for men," with divers great and precious promises; that thereby we "might be partakers of the Divine nature, having "first escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." 2 Pet. i. 4. I say, we do believe and confess, that the active and passive obedience of Christ Jesus, affects our salvation throughout, as well from the power and pollution of sin, as from the guilt, he being a conqueror as well as a sacrifice, and both through suffering: yet they that reject his Divine gift, so obtained (and which he has given to them, by which to see their sin and the sinfulness of it, and to repent and turn away from it, and do so no more; and to wait upon God for daily strength, to resist the fiery darts

of the enemy, and to be comforted through the obedience of faith in and to this Divine grace of the Son of God,) such do not please God, believe truly in God, nor are they in a state of true Christianity and salvation.—

Awake, thou that sleepest in thy sin, or at best, in thy self-righteousness; awake, I say, and Christ shall give thee life! for he is the Lord from heaven, the quickening Spirit, that quickens us by his Spirit, if we do not resist it, and quench it by our disobedience, but receive, love, and obey it, in all the holy leadings and teachings of it. Rom. viii. 14, 15. To which Holy Spirit I commend my reader, that he may the better see where he is, and also come to the true belief and advantage of the doings and sufferings of our dear and blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who saves from the power and pollution, as well as guilt, of sin, all those that hear his knocks, and open the door of their hearts to him; that he may come in and work a real and thorough reformation in and for them: and so the benefit, virtue, and efficacy of his doings and sufferings without us, will come to be livingly and effectually applied and felt, and fellowship with Christ in his death and sufferings known, according to the doctrine of the apostle; which those who live in that which made him suffer, know not, though they profess to be saved by his death and sufferings.—

Wherefore, O, my Reader! rest not thyself wholly satisfied with what Christ has done for thee in his blessed person without thee, but press to know his power and kingdom within thee, that the strong man, that has too long kept thy house, may be bound, and his goods spoiled, his works destroyed, and sin ended, (according to 1 John iii. 8, for which end, says

that beloved disciple, Christ was manifested):— that all things may become new, *New heavens and new earth, in which righteousness dwelleth.* Thus thou wilt come to glorify God in thy body and in thy spirit, which are his; and live to him and not to thyself. Thy love, joy, worship, and obedience; thy life, conversation, and practice; thy study, meditation, and devotion, will be spiritual: for the Father and the Son will make their abode with thee, and Christ will manifest himself to thee; for the secrets of the Lord are with them that fear him; and a holy unction, or anointing, have all those, which leads them into all truth, and they need not the teachings of men. They are better taught, being instructed by the Divine oracle: no bare hearsay or traditional Christians, but fresh and living witnesses: those that have seen with their own eyes, and heard with their own ears, and have handled with their own hands, the word of life, in the divers operations of it, to their souls' salvation. In this they meet, in this they preach, and in this they pray and praise: behold the new covenant fulfilled, the church and worship of Christ, the great Anointed of God, and the great Anointing of God, in his holy high priesthood, and offices in his church!

The same author, in a tract entitled "A Key opening the way to every capacity, how to distinguish the Religion professed by the Quakers, from the *Perversions* and *Misrepresentations* of their Adversaries, &c." writes as follows:

Of the Divinity of Christ.

Perversion. The Quakers deny Christ to be God.

Principle. A most untrue and unreasonable censure: for their great and characteristic principle being this, that Christ, as the Divine Word, lighteth the souls of all men that come into the world, with a spiritual and saving light, according to John i. 9, viii. 12, (which nothing but the Creator of souls can do,) it does sufficiently show they believe him to be God; for they truly and expressly own him to be so, according to Scripture, viz. In him was life, and the life was the light of men; and he is God over all blessed for ever.*

Of the Manhood of Christ.

Perversion. The Quakers deny the human nature of Christ.

Principle. We never taught, said, or held so gross a thing; if by human nature be understood the manhood of Christ Jesus. For as we believe him to be God over all blessed for ever, so we do as truly believe him to be of the seed of Abraham and David after the flesh, and therefore truly and properly man, like us in all things (and once subject to all things for our sakes) sin only excepted.†

Of Christ Jesus, his Death and Sufferings.

Perversion. The Quakers expect to be justified and saved by the light within them, and not by the death and sufferings of Christ.

Principle. This is both unfairly and untruly stated and charged upon us. But the various sense of the word justification, obliges me here

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* John i. 4. Rom. ix. 5.

† Isa. vii. 14. Matt. i. 22, 23. Luke i. 31.

to distinguish the use of it; for in the natural and proper sense, it plainly implies making men just, that were unjust; godly, that were ungodly; upright, that were depraved; as the apostle expresseth himself, 1 Cor. vi. 11. "And such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." In the other use of the word, which some call a law-sense, it refers to Christ, as a sacrifice and propitiation for sin, as in Rom. v. 9. "Much more then being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him: and 1 John ii. 1, 2. If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." Which, though a great truth, and most firmly believed by us, yet none can be entitled to the benefit thereof, but as they come to believe and repent of the evil of their ways; and then it may be truly said, that God justifieth even the ungodly, and looks upon them, through Christ, as if they had never sinned; because their sins are forgiven them for his beloved son's sake.

Not that God looks on people to be in Christ that are not in Christ; that is, that are not in the faith, obedience, and self-denial of Christ; nor sanctified, nor led by his spirit, but rebel against it; and instead of dying to sin, through a true and unfeigned repentance, live and indulge themselves daily in it; for they that are in Christ, become new creatures; old things are passed away, and all things with them become new. Wherefore we say, that whatever Christ then did, both living and dying, was of great benefit to the salvation of all that have believed, and

now do, and that hereafter shall believe in him unto justification and acceptance with God: but the way to come to that faith is, to receive and obey the manifestation of his divine light and grace in their consciences, which leads men to believe and value, and not to disown and undervalue Christ, as the common Sacrifice and Mediator.* For we do affirm, that to follow this holy light in the conscience, and to turn our minds, and bring all our deeds and thoughts to it, is the readiest, nay the only right way to have true living and sanctifying faith in Christ, as he appeared in the flesh, and to discern the Lord's body, coming, and sufferings aright, and to receive any real benefit by him, as our only sacrifice and mediator: according to the beloved disciple's emphatical passages,—If we walk in the light, as [God] is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.† And because this people say, that Christ's outward coming and sufferings profit not to their salvation, that live in sin, and rebel against this Divine light, some have untruly and uncharitably concluded, that they deny the virtue and benefit of Christ's coming and sufferings in the flesh, as a sacrifice for sin. Whereas we only deny and oppose a false and dangerous application of them in and to a disobedient state. For we believe Christ came not to save men in their sins, but from their sins; and that those that open the door of their hearts at his inward and spiritual knocks,‡ (to wit, the reproofs and convictions of his light and grace,) have their consciences sprinkled with his blood, (that is, discharged from the guilt of them,) from dead works to serve

* John iii. 20, 21. 1 John i. 5, 6, 7.
† 1 John i. 7. ‡ Rev. iii. 20.

the living God: and that so far only as men come by faith, repentance, and amendment to be Christ's, Christ is theirs; and as he has an interest in their hearts, they have an interest in his love and salvation; that is, so far as they are obedient to his grace, and take up his cross, and follow him in the ways of meekness, holiness, and self-denial, so far they have an interest in Christ, and no farther. And here there is no condemnation indeed to them that are in Christ Jesus, because such walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit. For we have seen a shoal or sand here, that we fear many thousands have split upon, which we desire to avoid, and are earnest that others may beware of it also, viz. that because Christ died a sacrifice for the sins of the whole world, by which he put mankind into a capacity of salvation, and has given every one a talent of grace to work it out by; they presume upon the sacrifice, and sin on, without a thorough repentance, reformation, and conversion to God, not dying with Christ to the world, but living in it, according to the lusts and spirit of it. Such as these may be assured, that where Christ is gone they shall never come; for, says the blessed apostle, God sent his Son to bless us, by turning every one of us from the evil of our way. So that the contrite, humble, meek, and self-denying people, are those that have the true and full benefit of Christ's coming, suffering, and mediation, and of all those holy ends for which God his Father anointed and gave him to the world, viz. to be the way, truth, and life; light, leader, and saviour; to be a king, priest, prophet, sacrifice, sanctifier, and mediator. Being sensibly felt of all such to reign over their hearts, teach them God's royal law, give them saving knowledge,

and to meditate, atone for, sanctify, and justify them in the sight of God his Father for ever.

By all which it is evident to any moderate inquirer that we acknowledge Christ in his double appearance; as in the flesh, of the seed of Abraham, so in the Spirit, as he is God over all, blessed for ever. Wherein is a full confession to him both as a blessed person, and as a divine principle of light and life in the soul; the want of which necessary and evident distinction occasions our adversaries' frequent mistakes about our belief and application of the Scriptures of truth concerning Christ, in that two-fold capacity.

For it is not another than that eternal Word, light, power, wisdom, and righteouness, which then took flesh, and appeared in that holy body, by whom they have received, or can receive any true spiritual benefit. They holding, light is only from him, forgiveness only through him, and sanctification only by him. So that their ascribing salvation from sin and death eternal to him in this age, who now appears by his holy Spirit to their souls, as before expressed, cannot render him no Saviour in that age, or make void the end and benefit of his blessed appearance then in the flesh on earth, or his mediation now in glory, for those that believe in him in this age. Whose doctrine pierced, whose life preached, whose miracles astonished, whose blood atoned, and whose death, resurrection, and ascension confirmed that blessed manifestation to be no less than that of the word God, (the life and light of men) manifested in the flesh, according to the apostle Paul, for the salvation of the world:* and therefore properly and truly was the Son of Man on earth, and is now as truly the Son of

* John i. 4-9. 1 Tim. iii. 16.

Man in glory, as the head of our manhood, which shall also be glorified, if we now receive him into our hearts, as the true light, that leads in the way of life eternal, and continue in well-doing to the end.

Of Good Works.

Perversion. Thus it is the Quakers set up works, and meriting by works, like the Papists; whereby justification by faith in Christ is laid aside.

Principle. By no means: But they say, with the apostle James, ch. ii. that true faith in Christ cannot be without works, any more than a body can live without a spirit; and that where there is life there is motion, and where there is no divine life and motion, there can be no true faith; believing being a fruit of divine life. Nay, by the comparison, if they were separable, works being compared to the spirit, they would have the better. The very believing is an act of the mind concurring with God's working in or upon the mind, and therefore a godly work. And no sooner is true faith begotten in a soul, but it falls to working; which is both the nature, and in some respect, the end of it.

Nor yet do we say, that our very best works, proceeding from the true faith itself, can merit; no, nor faith joined with them, because eternal life is the gift of God. All that man is capable of believing or performing, can never properly be said to merit everlasting blessedness, because there can be no proportion (as there must be in case of merit) between the best works that can be performed in the life of man, and an eternal felicity. Wherefore all that man can do, even with the assistance of the Holy Spirit, can never

be said strictly to merit, as a debt due to the creature: but on the other hand, that right faith, and good works, which arise out of it, or will follow it, may and do obtain the blessed immortality (which it pleaseth Almighty God to give and privilege the sons of men with, who perform that necessary condition) is a gospel and necessary truth. And this the Quakers ground upon, and therefore boldly affirm to the world.—

So that men are not justified, because they are sanctified, but for his sake that sanctifies them, and works all their good works in them and for them, and presents them blameless;* to wit Christ Jesus, who is made unto them as he was to the saints of old, wisdom, righteousnes, sanctification and redemption; that he that glorieth might glory in the Lord.†

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* Isa. xxvi. 12. † 1 Cor. i. 30, 31.

RICHARD CLARIDGE, in a piece printed in the year 1726, entitled "An Essay on the doctrine of Christ's Satisfaction for the Sins of Mankind," says,—As to the doctrine of Christ's satisfaction for the sins of mankind, that we unfeignedly embrace according to the Scriptures——[but] that which we deny——is the impossibility of God's pardoning of sin upon repentance, without a "plenary satisfaction to his "vindictive justice, by inflicting the penalty of "infinite wrath and vengeance on Jesus Christ, "—— who for sins past, present, and to come, "hath wholly borne and paid it, (whether for all "or some,) to the offended infinite justice of his "Father."

This is that which we deny, because it is repugnant to the doctrine of the holy scriptures, which testify of the infinitely just and righteous God, that He is "merciful and gracious, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin," Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7; "good and ready to forgive, and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon him," Psal. lxxxvi. 5; that his mercy "is from everlasting to everlasting, upon them that fear him," Psal. ciii. 17; "endureth for ever," Psal. cxxxvi. throughout; that "he delighteth in mercy," Mic. vii. 18; is "the Father of mercies," 2 Cor. i. 3; long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance," 2 Pet. iii. 9. "Return thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord, and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you; for I am merciful, saith the Lord, and I will not keep anger for ever." Jer. iii. 12. "Repent and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby

ye have transgressed, and make you a new heart, and a new spirit; for why will ye die, O house of Israel! For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God; wherefore turn yourselves and live ye." Ezek. xviii. 30, 31, 32. And therefore God, who "sent not his Son into the world, to condemn the world, but that the world through him, might be saved," John iii. 17. "commandeth all men every where to repent." Acts xvii. 30. For the sending of his Son, wherein "was manifested the love of God toward us," 1 John iv. 9. was not only to "be the propitiation for our sins," *v.* 10; but also "to bless us," in turning away every one of us "from our iniquities." Acts iii. 26. And therefore Christ testified of himself, saying, "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance," Mat. ix. 13. "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost," Luke xix. 10; such as are sick, and need a physician. Luke v. 31. Pursuant whereunto saith Peter, "him hath God exalted with his right hand, to be a Prince, and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins; and we are his witnesses of these things, and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him." Acts v. 31, 32. For, "to him give all the prophets witness, that through his name, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." Acts x. 43. And this without "such a rigid payment or satisfaction," as the suffering of "infinite wrath and vengeance."——Christ was made "Sin," or a sacrifice for sin for us. 2 Cor. v. 21. And "bore our sins in his own body on the tree." 1 Pet. ii. 24. Yet he "did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." *v.* 22, and therefore "suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." 1 Peter iii. 18. And his

sufferings were exceeding great both in his soul and body, but they were finite. For he laid down his life, and took it up again. See John x. 17. "Having loosed the pains of death; because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. Acts ii. 24. And therefore not infinite, as [some] misunderstanding the scriptures, erroneously assert. We do believe that he suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried, that, "he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." 1 John ii. 2. That it is through his blood, that we have redemption, even the forgiveness of sins. Col. i. 14. We do believe, that as he "was delivered for our offences," so he "was raised again for our justification." Rom. iv. 25, and ever liveth to make intercession for us, Heb. vii. 25. We do also believe, that he was and is both God and Man, in wonderful union——— God uncreated, see John i. 1, 2, 3, Col. i, 17, Heb. i. 8, 10, 12, "The true God." 1 John v. 20. "The great God." Tit. ii. 13. "The Lord of Glory." James ii. 1. "King of Kings and Lord of Lords." Rev. xix. 16———"The same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." Heb. xiii. 8. And man *conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary, see Luke i. 31, 35, who suffered for our salvation: "hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet-smelling savor." Eph v. 2. And "by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained, "or found, as the [Greek] word signifies, "eternal redemption for us." Heb. ix 12. It was (see 1 Tim. ii. 5.) the Man Christ Jesus, the one Mediator between God and Men, that was conceived, born, suffered, died, and gave himself a ransom for all; for through the eternal

* Creed, commonly called the Apostles'.

Spirit, he "offered himself without spot to God." Heb. ix. 14. Though by wicked hands he was "crucified and slain." Acts ii. 23. And in the offering of himself, he was a true and real sacrifice and propitiation for sin, acceptable and satisfactory to God. But he was not a sinner, or reputed by God as such; for the apostle saith expressly, that he knew no sin, 2 Cor. v. 21, was "without sin," Heb. iv. 15, was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." Heb. vii. 26. But it was wicked men, that——— condemned him, the just and holy one, as a sinner, and numbered him with the transgressors. Isa. liii. 12.——

——As it was the main design of Christ's life, doctrine and miracles, to call men to repentance, faith and obedience; so it was also the great end of his Sufferings and Death, to accomplish the same glorious design. For he "gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father," Gal i. 4. He "loved the Church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water, by the word: that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing: but that it should be holy, and without blemish," Eph. v. 25, 26, 27. He "gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Tit. ii. 14. This was a principal end of his giving of himself for us, or offering himself a sacrifice of propitiation for the sins of mankind. For "he died for all, that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again, 2 Cor. v. 15. This is the argument that the apostle much

insisted upon, and for the further enforcing of it, I shall mention but two places more. "Ye are bought," saith he, "with a price, therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's," 1 Cor. vi. 20. "And you that were some time alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled, in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy, and unblamable, and unreprovable in his sight." Col. i. 21. 22.

Some of the consequences of the vulgar doctrine of satisfaction, [are] expressly contrary to these scriptures: "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." Mat. xix. 27. "Not every one that sayeth unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in Heaven," ib. vii. 21. "Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock." *v.* 24. "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you," John xv. 14. "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me," John xiv. 21. "If a man love me, he will keep my words," *v.* 23. "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love." John xv. 10. "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them," John xiii. 17. "Yea, rather blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it." Luke xi. 28. "Hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments," 1 John ii. 3. "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments," 1 John v. 3. "Every one that doeth righteousness, is born of him, 1 John ii. 29. "Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness, is righteous, even as he is righteous," 1 John iii. 7. "Blessed are they that do his commandments,

that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates, into the city," Rev. xxii. 14. And as keeping of God's commandments is manifestly a condition of the gospel covenant, so also is faith. "He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." John iii. 36. "He that believeth on him, is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God," v. 18. "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins," John viii. 24. "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart, that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved," Rom. x. 9. "Without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God, must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him," Heb. xi. 6. So that faith is evidently a condition of the new covenant. And as to what [has been said] "that Christ doth justify a person before he doth believe:" it is directly opposite to the Apostle's testimony, "We have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, Gal. ii. 16. "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness," Rom. x. 10. "What saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness," Rom. iv. 3. "Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead," v. 23, 24. And whereas [it has been also said] "that salvation is not the end of any good work we do;" [this] plainly contradicts the Apostle, who saith of Moses, that "he had respect unto the

recompence of the reward," Heb. xi. 26. and of himself, "I press towards the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus," Phil. iii. 14. Again, said he, "Know ye not that they which run in a race, run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things: now they do it, to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible," 1 Cor. ix. 24, 25. So that it is apparent, that the new covenant is conditional, and that salvation is the end of our obedience, for Christ Jesus is "the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him," Heb. v. 9.

But though the new covenant is conditional, yet we do not understand that repentance, faith, and obedience, are such conditions as give right unto eternal life and salvation, as a reward due in a way of merit,———for nothing that we can do can possibly deserve so inestimable a blessing: it being conferred merely of God's free grace and mercy, in and through his Son Christ Jesus, upon our repentance, faith, and obedience: but we understand them to be such necessary qualifications of the subjects of Christ's kingdom, as that without them, no man can enter thereinto; and these not performed in our own strength, but by the power of Christ in us, without whom we can do nothing that is acceptable to God. We do not therefore say, that good works are meritorious of eternal life, as the Papists do; but we say, they are acceptable to God through Jesus Christ, who alone works in the faithful to will and to do that which is good; and it is not of man's merit, but of God's infinite mercy that he is pleased to reward them.

FINIS.

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No cards

REMARKS

ON

THE DOCTRINE

OF THE

Influence

OF

THE HOLY SPIRIT.

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Advertisement.

THE observations contained in the following pages are to be met with in a pamphlet lately published, entitled "The Christian Doctrine of the Holy Spirit, exhibited from the Scriptures, with introductory remarks;" sold by W. Phillips, and Darton and Harvey, London; also by W. Alexander, York. The extracts in the compilation consist of nearly all the material passages in the New Testament, wherein mention is made of the Spirit, either doctrinally or incidentally; without selection further than to avoid unnecessary repetition, and in the order in which they occur. The introductory remarks have been thought so valuable, as to merit a second publication in this form, with the intention that they should thus be more widely circulated. It will afford pleasure to the publishers, if the reading of these arguments should induce a desire to examine the work from which they are extracted.

REMARKS, &c.

THE influence of the Spirit of Truth on the mind, has been maintained by the most eminent and pious persons in all ages, and to it they have attributed their stability and advancement in true religion. This is strong presumptive evidence that it is consistent with the doctrine contained in the Scriptures, but more especially in the New Testament; and ought to render us doubly careful, that we do not reject it without due examination. Notwithstanding, there is a class of persons professing christianity who consider this gift to have been shed only on the primitive believers, and that any belief in its existence in the present day, is irrational and enthusiastic.

On viewing the objections of those who profess to deny the influence of the Spirit, the following considerations present themselves:—That the effusion of the Holy Spirit was announced by the Prophets who foretold the coming of our Lord, and promulgated by his precursor, John,* as a distinguishing circumstance attending the introduction of the gospel; which shews it to have been an *integral* part of that dispensation, and that

* Matt. iii. 1, 12. Mark i. 1-8. John i. 29-33.

it must therefore continue till the dispensation is abrogated; which cannot in common reason be denied.

That we are supported in this opinion, by a reference to the intention for which this gift was dispensed to mankind; which, it appears by scripture testimony, was for the purpose of assisting man in the work of regeneration;* and which assistance must be equally necessary now, as his weakness and liability to sin and transgression remain unchanged.

That, though the effusion of the Spirit upon many of the primitive believers, was attended with extraordinary gifts, to forward the purposes of the Divine will in the establishment of the Gospel, yet it was not universally so; but appeared in the great mass of the early believers, in the same way as it is believed to appear in the present day: not being attended with extraordinary gifts, but producing the effects of righteousness.

That the fruits of the Spirit cannot be different from or contradictory to what is asserted in the Scriptures; and therefore a belief in its influence on the mind, cannot be enthusiastic or irrational, though it may be misunderstood and abused.

A few brief observations on these points may be useful to such readers, as have not been accustomed to consider this subject with reference to the objection stated.

It is undoubtedly the object of true religion to purify the heart and conduct, so as to render us worthy of the divine acceptance, and the enjoyment of a state of bliss hereafter: or in other words, of an admission into the kingdom of heaven; but in order to this, we must in this life

* John iii. 1-8.

have undergone that change of our nature, which will in some degree assimilate us to the divine purity; the necessity of which is fully stated in the Scriptures. In the emphatic language of our Saviour, it is called being born again; and the same purpose is variously named in different parts of the New Testament*. This change conscious as we must be of sin and imperfection, must be allowed to be fully consistent with our ideas of what is reasonable and correct; but when it assumes the shape of a divine revelation, we are not permitted to doubt of its *necessity*. The sayings of our Lord, as well as the writings of his Apostles, fully confirm it. In that conversation which he had with Nicodemus, memorable for its deep instruction in religious truth, this change is ascribed to the operation of the Spirit; and, it must be effected by the same means to the end of time; our natural state being the same it has always been.

His discourse with the woman of Samaria† points out a living principle, to be given by him, which was to produce eternal life to its possessor: and with this there is a remarkable coincidence, in his declaration on the last great day of the Feast, which the Evangelist expressly declares to allude to the gift of the Spirit, which was to be shed after he was glorified.‡ The parable of the Man§ and his Friend, is equally clear as to the Divine intention in this respect, and that we ought, moreover, earnestly to desire it. And it may be here asked, as we are by nature so prone to sin, how are we to root out our evil propensities, but by some assistance *different* in its nature and purpose? What but this must enable us to

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* Ephes. iv. 15-30. v. 8-21. † John iv. 5-26.
‡ John vii. 37-39. § Luke xi. 5-13.

take up the daily cross to our natural inclinations? to deny ourselves the pleasures of sense, or the allurements of interest, when they are inconsistent with purity? The deficient practice of all mankind, while they have not their dependence on Divine aid, is a clear answer to these questions; for however fair the outward conduct may appear, if the source of action—the heart, be not purified, which it can only be through the operation of Divine power, it only wants the storms of temptation to overthrow the fabric: and, as the nature of sin is the same in all, though its modifications may be various, so we are all equally in need of this assistance—the learned with the ignorant—the philosopher with the peasant.

Persons possessed of good natural dispositions, and placed in situations favourable to regular conduct, may have a sort of habitual morality, which leaves us nothing to accuse them of; but let them not suppose themselves secure on that account. That virtue which is not the effect of principle is of very uncertain duration, and we are *all* required to *improve* our talents and advantages. We ought also to remember, that Christianity goes upon the necessity of a *change* of our nature and affections, as the only sure means of producing conduct, consistent with the purity of its precepts, under all circumstances; even where our private interests and inclinations may be opposed to it. The work of religion, if properly undertaken, is sure in its end, but it is of gradual, and sometimes, from the prevalence of our lusts, of painful operation; and if our minds are sufficiently awakened to the subject, none will find time for idleness or self-security.

*In those sublime and instructive conversations

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* John xiv. 15-27. xv. xvi. 1-14. and xvii.

which our Saviour had with his disciples, a short time previous to his suffering, as well as in that ever-memorable prayer he offered up for them, he has shewn that the great purpose of his mission was to reveal the way of Truth, and to establish a spiritual communion and communication with himself and the Father, through the Holy Spirit, for our help and direction in the way of righteousness. The necessity of *keeping* up this communication, in order to the production of Fruit, is beautifully, and incontrovertibly set forth, in the parable of the Vine and the Branches. This Spirit, he also declared, was to lead into all truth, and to reprove *the world* of sin, of righteousness and of judgment; thus comprehending every thing that can relate to salvation, or the knowledge of God. These declarations are in themselves decisive, and as they are elucidated by the Apostles, they become further confirmed. The manner in which they have reasoned on the operations of the Spirit, and declared its effects, clearly shew, that to it was attributed their progress in the Christian life. For though some had extraordinary gifts for the service of the Church, as appears by 1 Cor. chap. xii. yet these being for specific purposes, could not be expected to be possessed by all. But the Apostle says, "a *manifestation of the Spirit* is given to *every man* to *profit* withal." This shows its *general* intention with respect to mankind at large. And the extraordinary gifts he enumerates, had ultimately the same tendency, by an unusual display of Divine power, to strike conviction on the mind of the most unenlightened, as well as to remove the opposition and prejudices of the Jews, who had become so much attached to the ritual of the law, that it was with difficulty they would admit the evidences of

a religion, so pure and spiritual as Christianity.

It is remarkable, in the chapter just named, as well as in that which immediately follows, how earnestly the Apostle recommends them to covet the *best* gifts, in contradistinction to those which were extraordinary; and concludes by showing what he calls "a more excellent way," pointing out the possession of Charity, as comprehending the substance of Christianity, to be a transcendent object of attainment; without which, all other qualifications, how extraordinary soever, are of no value: and in continuation, in the next chapter, the xivth, he shows, by a course of strong and clear reasoning, the superiority of the gift of prophecy, or speaking to edification, exhortation, and comfort, over that of speaking with tongues; which further confirms the opinion, that the direct and permanent object of spiritual gifts, was the establishment of righteousness. It is therefore quite consistent with sound reason to conclude, that after Christianity was firmly established, the miraculous gifts would be withdrawn; an opinion, which is without detriment to the continuation of those gifts, which remain to be necessary in the constitution of a Christian church. Hence gospel ministry, as well as other qualifications for the spiritual service of the church, must continue to be derived from the same source: and is therefore not dependent on human learning or attainments, though our usefulness may be increased by the possession of them. Nor let any one suppose, that this opinion leads to enthusiasm or self-exaltation. Spiritual gifts are not at our command, and no man receives them, who is not promoting the work of redemption in his own mind: and as every step he takes in advance, must be preceded and followed by a perception of his own imper-

fection and unworthiness, it must have a constant tendency to produce *humility*, meekness, and gentleness: and if these effects are not produced such a person is deceiving himself. A due degree of earnestness and fervency in our religious duties, is, however very proper; and must necessarily follow an advancement in the knowledge and love of God.

It appears, therefore, that those who ascribe pride or enthusiasm to a belief in this doctrine, have a mistaken view of it. Perhaps they have never examined the writings of the Evangelists and Apostles with sufficient attention; or have been misled by a strong attachment to pre-conceived opinions, which may have been inculcated in early youth.

It is not unusual for such persons to ask for definitions and explanations on this subject, which from its nature cannot be given. We may be very sure of a thing which we feel, though we may fail in defining that feeling to the satisfaction of another, who is not inclined to admit it. Our own experience teaches us, how slowly we admit an outward fact, when the mind is fore-closed against it; much more things of a less tangible nature. To such persons it may be observed, that those impressions which are not received into the mind, *through the medium of the outward senses*, are not in their nature capable of explanation, except by their effects; in the same way, as many of our common feelings can only be explained, by a reference to similar feelings in others. We feel the influence of the Spirit of Truth, reproving us for the evil of our thoughts and conduct, and constraining us to aspire after greater purity of life and manners; and humbling us under a sense of our weakness and imperfec-

tions; and having this feeling, we know that it exists, although the exact way of its operation may be difficult to define, to those who are indisposed to acknowledge the same influence. We also find it conformable to those descriptions of its nature and effects, which we meet with in the New Testament. Our Saviour's words to Nicodemus seem to confirm these remarks: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Those therefore who would deprive Christianity of its spiritual character, would deprive it of what is its distinguishing and superior recommendation. For from this cause alone can arise that uniform and exemplary morality, which is the possession only of inward worth, and of a mind purified on Christian principles. *Any person who will attentively read the New Testament, must be convinced, if plain evidence will do it, that the religion taught by Christ is spiritual in its nature, and must therefore have a spiritual *ministration*.† It cannot be supposed, when we consider those pathetic illustrations of the paternal regard of our Creator, which have been given by Christ in his discourses, that our Almighty parent would require from us, a degree of purity which he would not enable us to attain. Indeed there is no adequate reason, unless the fault be on our part, why the effusion of the Holy Spirit should be attended with less power now, miraculous gifts apart, than it was in the days of the primitive Christians. Though all men have sufficient illumination to guide their steps

* Romans viii. 1-17. 1 Cor. ii. 9-16. Galat. v. 16-26.
† Colos. i. 21-29,

in the pursuit of truth, yet if they are not sincerely* disposed to follow it, they must be deficient in that degree of faith which is necessary to the full influence of the Spirit. It is easy for a man to say he is a Christian, being so by profession; but amongst the primitive believers, no man would assume the name, who was not so in heart; since he had a test of his sincerity always ready, in the scorn of unconverted friends, and the abuse of a prejudiced and hard-hearted people. Nothing therefore but a conviction of the truth of Christianity, and the consequent obligation to obey its precepts, could induce him to embrace a profession, which carried with it so many circumstances mortifying to human nature. The same sincerity of conversion would in the present day produce the same effects, in the assistance and communion of the Holy Spirit, in that degree which our particular situation might require, in the sight of divine wisdom. I would ask any person of sound understanding, if it would seem consistent with the divine intention, to introduce a gift attended with so many extraordinary circumstances, and sanctioned by the descent of the Son of God, if it were intended to be withdrawn with the first believers, who form so small a part of his rational creation? Such an opinion seems irreconcileable with the *undiminished* power, the wisdom, the justice, and the beneficence of God. But on this, as well as every other question connected with our well-being, the sacred volume is sufficiently clear to common understandings, and a disbelief in any of the fundamental principles of Christianity, if examined into, would be found

* The evidence of sincerity is obedience to the divine law, so far as we know it. See James ii. 14 to 17.

frequently to arise from a disinclination to submit to those salutary privations which it requires; but which are at the same time the only certain evidence of our faith and love to God. Let us not therefore deceive ourselves: if our salvation be wrought out, it can only be by those means which he has appointed. And if it should appear by the scriptures, that it must be effected through the influence and assistance of the Spirit, it is in vain for us to seek out another way. Sincerity and true devotedness are only wanting on our part, to be effectual through the divine promises, for the production of all the beneficial consequences, so strikingly expressed in various parts of the scripture. This divine instructor would wound us only to heal, and as we yielded to its reproofs, would often draw our minds into retirement and prayer for the pardon of our transgressions, and for assistance more fully to obey the divine will; and finally establish that communion between the soul of man and his God, which our Saviour largely testified of,* and which, whether in public assemblies, or in private retirement, must be the medium of divine communication and worship: and, if continued in, we should in our spiritual progress undoubtedly experience the truth of the prophetic declaration "I will make "darkness light before them; and crooked "things straight; these things will I do unto "them, and not forsake them."†

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* John xiv. xv. xvi. Ephes. ii. 16-22. † Isa. xlii. 16.

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MEMOIR

OF

JOHN WOOLMAN,

Chiefly extracted from a

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MEMOIR &c.

WHEN the Redeemer of mankind was addressed with the question, 'Are there few that be saved?' his reply tended not so much to satisfy the curiosity, as to awaken the vigilance of the hearers: "Strive," said he, "to enter in at the strait gate; for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." He then proceeded to warn the Jews of their danger, notwithstanding their high profession, of being rejected as "workers of iniquity;" and he plainly intimated the more ready obedience of the Gentiles: "They shall come from the east and from the west, and from the north and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God; and, behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last."* The number of those who, from age to age, obey Christ's call in the spirit,† and become his chosen and faithful servants, is indeed comparatively small. Yet the church, we have

* Luke xiii. 23, 30. † Rev. iii. 20, 22.

reason to be assured, shall at length form a great multitude, which no man can number, of all nations and kindreds, and people, and tongues, who shall stand before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and with palms in their hands, ascribing their salvation to God and to the Lamb.*

If we estimate on principles like these, the characters of professing Christians, we shall often see reason to differ in our judgment from the multitude. On one hand, the most specious pretensions, not founded on the work of Christ in the heart, will cease to have weight with us; on the other, a diversity in sect or doctrine, the "kindred" or "tongue" of a believer, differing from our own, will not prevent us, when his deeds certify well of his faith, from placing him in the number of those whom the Lamb has conducted to victory. Neither will his own low esteem of himself become to us the measure of his real worth, since there are of the last here on earth (in outward shew, and in their own eyes) who shall be with the first in the eternal kingdom.

JOHN WOOLMAN, the subject of this memoir, was a member of the society of Friends, commonly called Quakers, in North America. He was a bright example of purity and lowliness of heart, a preacher of the righteousness which is of faith, and one of those who laboured most early and earnestly, to open the eyes of mankind to the complicated injustice and cruelty of negro slavery, as well as of the trade which supplies its victims. To those who love mercy, and

* Rev. vii. 9, 10.

who have rejoiced in the removal, thus far, of that deep reproach to Christianity, it may be interesting to trace the progressive formation of the character of this Advocate for mercy, and having contemplated some of his opinions and acts in life, to view him in its humble and peaceful close.—His account of himself opens thus:

"I have often felt a motion of love to leave some hints in writing of my experience of the goodness of God: and now, in the thirty-sixth year of my age I begin this work.

I was born in Northampton, in Burlington county, West Jersey, in the year 1720; and, before I was seven years old I began to be acquainted with the operations of divine love. Through the care of my parents, I was taught to read nearly as soon as I was capable of it; and, as I went from school one seventh-day, I remember, while my companions went to play by the way, I went forward out of sight, and, sitting down, I read the 22nd chapter of the Revelations: "He shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, &c." and, in reading it, my mind was drawn to seek after that pure habitation, which, I then believed, God had prepared for his servants. The place where I sat, and the sweetness that attended my mind, remain fresh in my memory.

This, and the like gracious visitations, had that effect upon me, that when boys used ill language it troubled me; and, through the continued mercies of God, I was preserved from it.

The pious instructions of my parents were often fresh in my mind when I happened to be among wicked children, and were of use to me.

My parents, having a large family of children, used frequently, on first-days after meeting, to put us to read in the holy Scriptures, or some religious books, one after another, the rest sitting by without much conversation; which, I have since often thought, was a good practice. From what I had read and heard, I believed there had been, in past ages, people who walked in uprightness before God, in a degree exceeding any that I knew, or heard of, now living: And the apprehension of there being less steadiness and firmness, amongst people in this age than in past ages, often troubled me while I was a child.

A thing remarkable in my childhood was, that once, going to a neighbour's house, I saw, on the way, a robin sitting on her nest, and as I came near, she went off, but, having young ones, flew about, and, with many cries, expressed her concern for them. I stood and threw stones at her, till, one striking her, she fell down dead. At first I was pleased with the exploit, but after a few minutes was seized with horror, as having, in a sportive way, killed an innocent creature while she was careful for her young: I beheld her lying dead, and thought these young ones, for which she was so careful, must now perish for want of their dam to nourish them; and, after some painful considerations on the subject, I climbed up the tree, took all the young birds, and killed them; supposing that better than to leave them to pine away and die miserably: and believed, in this case, that scripture-proverb was fulfilled, 'The tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.' I then went on my errand, but, for some hours could think of little else but the cruelties I had committed, and was much troubled. Thus He, whose tender mercies are over all his works,

hath placed a principle in the human mind, which incites to exercise goodness towards every living creature; and this being singly attended to, people become tender-hearted and sympathizing: but being frequently and totally rejected, the mind becomes shut up in a contrary disposition.

About the twelfth year of my age, my father being abroad, my mother reproved me for some misconduct, to which I made an undutiful reply; and, the next first-day, as I was with my father returning from meeting, he told me he understood I had behaved amiss to my mother, and advised me to be more careful in future. I knew myself blamable, and in shame and confusion remained silent. Being thus awakened to a sense of my wickedness, I felt remorse in my mind, and, getting home, I retired and prayed to the Lord to forgive me; and do not remember that I ever, after that, spoke unhandsomely to either of my parents, however foolish in some other things.

Having attained the age of sixteen years, I began to love wanton company; and though I was preserved from profane language, or scandalous conduct, still I perceived a plant in me which produced much wild grapes; yet my merciful Father forsook me not utterly, but, at times, through his grace, I was brought seriously to consider my ways; and the sight of my backslidings affected me with sorrow; but, for want of rightly attending to the reproofs of instruction, vanity was added to vanity, and repentance to repentance. Upon the whole, my mind was more and more alienated from the truth, and I hastened toward destruction. While I meditate on the gulf towards which I travelled, and re-

fect on my youthful disobedience, for these things I weep, mine eyes run down with water.

Advancing in age, the number of my acquaintances increased, and thereby my way grew more difficult, though I had found comfort in reading the holy Scriptures, and thinking on heavenly things, I was now estranged therefrom: I knew I was going from the flock of Christ, and had no resolution to return; hence serious reflections were uneasy to me, and youthful vanities and diversions my greatest pleasure. Running in this road I found many like myself; and we associated in that which is the reverse of true friendship.

But in this swift race it pleased God to visit me with sickness, so that I doubted of recovering; and then did darkness, horror, and amazement, with full force, seize me, even when my pain and distress of body were very great. I thought it would have been better for me never to have had a being, than to see the day which I now saw. I was filled with confusion; and in great affliction both of mind and body, I lay and bewailed myself. I had not confidence to lift up my cries to God, whom I had thus offended; but, in a deep sense of my great folly, I was humbled before him; and, at length, that Word which is as a fire and a hammer, broke and dissolved my rebellious heart, and then my cries were put up in contrition; and in the multitude of his mercies I found inward relief, and felt a close engagement that, if he was pleased to restore my health, I might walk humbly before him.

After my recovery, this exercise remained with me a considerable time: but, by degrees, giving way to youthful vanities, they gained strength, and getting with wanton young people,

I lost ground. The Lord had been very gracious, and spoke peace to me in the time of my distress; and I now most ungratefully turned again to folly; on which account, at times, I felt sharp reproof. I was not so hardy as to commit things scandalous; but to exceed in vanity, and promote mirth, was my chief study. Still I retained a love for pious people, and their company brought an awe upon me. My dear parents, several times, admonished me in the fear of the Lord, and their admonition entered into my heart, and had a good effect for a season; but, not getting deep enough to pray rightly, the tempter, when he came, found entrance. I remember once, having spent a part of the day in wantonness, as I went to bed at night, there lay in a window, near my bed, a bible, which I opened, and first cast my eye on this text, 'We lie down in our shame, and our confusion covers us.' This I knew to be my case; and, meeting with so unexpected a reproof, I was somewhat affected with it, and went to bed under remorse of conscience: which I soon cast off again.

Thus time passed on: My heart was replenished with mirth and wantonness, and pleasing scenes of vanity were presented to my imagination, till I attained the age of eighteen years; near which time I felt the judgments of God, in my soul, like a consuming fire; and, looking over my past life, the prospect was moving.—I was often sad, and longed to be delivered from those vanities; then again, my heart was strongly inclined to them, and there was in me a sore conflict: At times I turned to folly, and then again, sorrow and confusion took hold of me. In a while, I resolved totally to leave off some of my vanities; but there was a secret reserve,

in my heart, of the more refined part of them, and I was not low enough to find true peace. Thus for some months, I had great troubles; there remaining in me an unsubjected will, which rendered my labours fruitless, till at length, through the merciful continuance of heavenly visitations, I was made to bow down in spirit before the Lord. I remember one evening I had spent some time in reading a pious author; and walking out alone, I humbly prayed to the Lord for his help, that I might be delivered from all those vanities which so ensnared me. Thus, being brought low, he helped me; and, as I learned to bear the cross, I felt refreshment to come from his presence; but, not keeping in that strength which gave victory, I lost ground again; the sense of which greatly affected me; and I sought deserts and lonely places, and there, with tears, did confess my sins to God, and humbly craved help of him. And I may say with reverence, he was near to me in my troubles, and in those times of humiliation opened my ear to discipline. I was now led to look seriously at the means by which I was drawn from the pure truth, and learned this, that, if I would live in the life which the faithful servants of God lived in, I must not go into company as heretofore in my own will; but all the cravings of sense must be governed by a divine principle. In times of sorrow and abasement, these instructions were sealed upon me, and I felt the power of Christ prevail over selfish desires, so that I was preserved in a good degree of steadiness; and, being young, and believing at that time that a single life was best for me, I was strengthened to keep from such company as had often been a snare to me.

I kept steadily to meetings; spent first-day

afternoons chiefly in reading the Scriptures and other good books; and was early convinced in mind, that true religion consisted in an inward life, wherein the heart doth love and reverence God the Creator, and learns to exercise true justice and goodness, not only toward all men, but also toward the brute creatures.—That as the mind was moved, by an inward principle, to love God as an invisible, incomprehensible Being, by the same principle it was moved to love him in all his manifestations in the visible world.—That, as by his breath the flame of life was kindled in all animal sensible creatures, to say we love God, and, at the same time exercise cruelty towards the least creature, is a contradiction in itself.

I found no narrowness respecting sects and opinions; but believed, that sincere upright-hearted people, in every society, who truly love God, were accepted of him.

All this time I lived with my parents, and wrought on the plantation; and, having had schooling pretty well for a planter, I used to improve it in winter evenings, and other leisure times; and, being now in the twenty-first year of my age, a man, in much business at shopkeeping and baking, asked me, if I would hire with him to tend shop and keep books. I acquainted my father with the proposal; and, after some deliberation, it was agreed for me to go.

At home I had lived retired; and now, having a prospect of being much in the way of company, I felt frequent and fervent cries in my heart to God, the Father of mercies, that he would preserve me from all corruption; that in this more public employment, I might serve him, my gracious Redeemer, in that humility and self-denial

with which I had been, in a small degree, exercised in a more private life. The man, who employed me, furnished a shop in Mount-Holly, about five miles from my father's house, and six from his own; and there I lived alone, and tended his shop. Shortly after my settlement here, I was visited by several young people, my former acquaintance, who knew not but vanities would be as agreeable to me now as ever; and, at these times, I cried to the Lord in secret, for wisdom and strength; for I felt myself encompassed with difficulties, and had fresh occasion to bewail the follies of time past, in contracting a familiarity with libertine people; and, as I had now left my father's house outwardly, I found my heavenly Father to be merciful to me beyond what I can express.

After a while, my former acquaintance gave over expecting me as one of their company; and I began to be known to some whose conversation was helpful to me: And now, as I had experienced the love of God through Jesus Christ, to redeem me from many pollutions, and to be a succour to me through a sea of conflicts, with which no person was fully acquainted; and as my heart was often enlarged in this heavenly principle, I felt a tender compassion for the youth, who remained entangled in snares, like those which had entangled me from one time to another. This love and tenderness increased; and my mind was more strongly engaged for the good of my fellow-creatures. I went to meetings in an awful frame of mind, and endeavoured to be inwardly acquainted with the language of the true Shepherd; and, one day, being under a strong exercise of spirit, I stood up, and said some words in a meeting; but, not keeping close to

the divine opening, I said more than was required of me: and being soon sensible of my error, I was afflicted in mind some weeks, without any light or comfort, even to that degree that I could not take satisfaction in any thing: I remembered God, and was troubled, and, in the depth of my distress, he had pity upon me, and sent the Comforter. I then felt forgiveness for my offence, and my mind became calm and quiet, being truly thankful to my gracious Redeemer for his mercies; and, after this, feeling the spring of divine love opened, and a concern to speak, I said a few words in a meeting, in which I found peace; this, I believe, was about six weeks from the first time. And, as I was thus humbled and disciplined under the cross, my understanding became more strengthened to distinguish the pure Spirit which inwardly moves upon the heart, and taught me to wait in silence sometimes many weeks together, until I felt that rise which prepares the creature.

From an inward purifying, and steadfast abiding under it, springs a lively operative desire for the good of others. All the faithful are not called to the public ministry; but whoever are, are called to minister of that which they have tasted and handled spiritually. The outward modes of worship are various; but, wherever any are true minister of Jesus Christ, it is from the operation of his Spirit upon their hearts, first purifying them, and thus giving them a just sense of the conditions of others.

This truth was early fixed in my mind; and I was taught to watch the pure opening, and to take heed, lest, while I was standing to speak, my own will should get uppermost, and cause me to utter words from worldly wisdom, and depart from the channel of the true gospel ministry.

In the management of my outward affairs, I may say, with thankfulness, I found truth to be my support, and I was respected in my master's family, who came to live in Mount-Holly within two years after my going there.

About the twenty-third year of my age, I had many fresh and heavenly openings, in respect to the care and providence of the Almighty, over his creatures in general, and over man as the most noble amongst those which are visible. And being clearly convinced in my judgment, that to place my whole trust in God was best for me, I felt renewed engagements, that in all things I might act on an inward principle of virtue, and pursue worldly business no further, than as truth opened my way therein.

My employer having a negro woman, sold her, and desired me to write a bill of sale, the man being waiting, who bought her. The thing was sudden; and, though the thoughts of writing an instrument of slavery for one of my fellow-creatures felt uneasy, yet I remembered I was hired by the year, that it was my master who directed me to do it, and that it was an elderly man, a member of our society, who bought her; so, through weakness, I gave way, and wrote; but, at the executing of it, I was so afflicted in my mind, that I said, before my master and the friend, that I believed slave-keeping to be a practice inconsistent with the Christan religion. This in some degree abated my uneasines; yet, as often as I reflected seriously upon it, I thought I should have been clearer, if I had desired to have been excused from it, as a thing against my conscience; for such it was. And, some time after this, a young man, of our society, spoke to me to write a conveyance of a slave to him, he having

lately taken a negro into his house: I told him I was not easy to write it; for, though many of our meeting and in other places kept slaves, I still believed the practice was not right, and desired to be excused from the writing. I spoke to him in good will: and he told me that keeping slaves was not altogether agreeable to his mind; but that the slave being a gift to his wife, he had accepted of her."

By this time John Woolman had begun to travel occasionally in the exercise of his gift as a minister, and in his account of one of these journeys, performed in company with a friend, we meet with the following remarks:

"We left our province on the 12th day of the third month, in the year 1746, and had several meetings in the upper part of Chester county, and near Lancaster; in some of which, the love of Christ prevailed, uniting us together in his service. Then we crossed the river Susquehannah, and had several meetings in a new settlement, called the Red-Lands; the oldest of which, as I was informed, did not exceed ten years. It is the poorer sort of people that commonly begin to improve remote deserts. With a small stock, they have houses to build, lands to clear and fence, corn to raise, clothes to provide, and children to educate; that Friends, who visit such, may well sympathize with them in their hardships in the wilderness; and though the best entertainment such can give may seem coarse to some, who are used to cities or old-settled places, it becomes the disciples of Christ to be content with it. Our hearts were sometimes enlarged in the love of our heavenly Father amongst these people; and the sweet influence

of his Spirit supported us through some difficulties: To him be the praise!—

Two things were remarkable to me in this journey; first, in regard to my entertainment, when I ate, drank, and lodged at free-cost, with people who lived in ease on the hard labour of their slaves, I felt uneasy; and, as my mind was inward to the Lord, I found, from place to place, this uneasiness return upon me, at times, through the whole visit. Where the masters bore a good share of the burthen, and lived frugally, so that their servants were well provided for, and their labour moderate, I felt more easy; but where they lived in a costly way, and laid heavy burthens on their slaves, my exercise was often great, and I frequently had conversation with them, in private, concerning it. Secondly; this trade of importing slaves from their native country being much encouraged amongst them, and the white people and their children so generally living without much labour, was frequently the subject of my serious thoughts: And I saw in these southern provinces so many vices and corruptions, increased by this trade and this way of life, that it appeared to me as a gloom over the land; and though now many willingly run into it, yet, in future, the consequence will be grievous to posterity; I express it as it hath appeared to me, not at once nor twice, but as a matter fixed on my mind."

Again in 1753, he relates thus:

"About this time, a person at some distance lying sick, his brother came to me to write his will: I knew he had slaves; and, asking his brother, was told he intended to leave them as

slaves to his children. As writing is a profitable employ, and as offending sober people was disagreeable to my inclination, I was straitened in my mind: but, as I looked to the Lord, he inclined my heart to his testimony; and I told the man that I believed the practice of continuing slavery to this people was not right, and had a scruple in my mind against doing writings of that kind; that, though many in our society kept them as slaves, still I was not easy to be concerned in it, and desired to be excused from going to write the will. I spake to him in the fear of the Lord; and he made no reply to what I said, but went away; he, also, had some concern in the practice; and I thought he was displeased with me. In this case I had a fresh confirmation, that acting contrary to present outward interest, from a motive of divine love, and in regard to truth and righteousness, opens the way to a treasure better than silver, to a friendship exceeding the friendship of men."

On some subsequent occasions, his judgment had sufficient weight to procure freedom for those negroes, who were the subjects of it.

"Scrupling to do writings relative to keeping slaves, having been the means of sundry small trials to me, in which I have so evidently felt my own will set aside, I think it good to mention a few of them. Tradesmen and retailers of goods, who depend on their business for a living, are naturally inclined to keep the good will of their customers; nor is it a pleasant thing for young men to be under any necessity to question the judgment or honesty of elderly men, and more especially of such as have a fair reputation. Deep-rooted customs,

though wrong, are not easily altered, but it is the duty of every one to be firm in that which they certainly know to be right for them. A charitable benevolent man, well acquainted with a negro, may I believe, under some circumstances, keep him in his family as a servant, from no other motive than the negro's good; but man, as man, knows not what shall be after him, nor hath he any assurance that his children will attain to that perfection in wisdom and goodness, necessary rightly to exercise such power: hence it is clear to me, that I ought not to be the scribe where wills are drawn, in which some children are made absolute masters over others during life.

About this time, 1755, an ancient man, of good esteem in the neighbourhood, came to my house to get his will written. He had young negroes; and I asked him privately, how he proposed to dispose of them: he told me: I then said, I cannot write thy will without breaking my own peace; and respectfully gave him my reasons for it. He signified that he had a choice that I should have written it; but as I could not, consistently with my conscience, he did not desire it; and so he got it written by some other person. And, a few years after, there being great alterations in his family, he came again to get me to write his will: his negroes were yet young, and his son, to whom he intended to give them, was, since he first spoke to me, from a libertine become a sober young man; and he supposed that I would have been free, on that account, to write it. We had much friendly talk on the subject, and then deferred it: a few days after, he came again, and directed their freedom; and so I wrote his will.

Near the time the last mentioned friend first

spoke to me, a neighbour received a bad bruise in his body, and sent for me to bleed him, which being done, he desired me to write his will. I took notes: and amongst other things, he told me to which of his children he gave his young negro. I considered the pain and distress he was in, and knew not how it would end; so I wrote his will, save only that part concerning his slave, and carrying it to his bed-side, read it to him, and then told him, in a friendly way, that I could not write any instruments by which my fellow-creatures were made slaves, without bringing trouble on my mind: I let him know that I charged nothing for what I had done; and desired to be excused from doing the other part in the way he proposed. We then had a serious conference on the subject; at length he agreeing to set her free, I finished his will."

Nor were his endeavours in this cause, limited to private or public conference. He wrote some "Considerations on keeping negroes," which being approved by his friends, were printed at the expense of the Society, and distributed among its members. This pamphlet he followed up by a second part on the same subject: and in many subsequent journeys, and opportunities which their meetings for discipline principally afforded him, he continued to bear his testimony against this oppression, and to exert an increasing influence on the minds of his fellow-professors.

The following reflections, written in 1757, while he was travelling on a religious account, among slave-holders, are forcibly descriptive of the views and feelings under which he was accustomed to reason on such occasions:

"From the time of my entering Maryland, I have been much under sorrow, which of late so increased upon me, that my mind was almost overwhelmed; and I may say with the Psalmist, "In my distress I called upon the Lord, and cried to my God," who, in infinite goodness, looked upon my affliction, and in my private retirement, sent the Comforter for my relief; for which I humbly bless his holy name. The sense I had of the state of the churches brought a weight of distress upon me. The gold to me appeared dim, and the fine gold changed*: and though this is the case too generally, yet the sense of it in these parts hath in a particular manner borne heavy upon me. It appeared to me that, through the prevailing of the spirit of this world, the minds of many were brought to an inward desolation; and instead of the spirit of meekness, gentleness, and heavenly wisdom, which are the necessary companions of the true sheep of Christ, a spirit of fierceness and the love of dominion too generally prevailed. From small beginnings in errors, great buildings by degrees are raised; and from one age to another are more and more strengthened by the general concurrence of the people: and as men obtain reputation by their profession of the truth, their virtues are mentioned as arguments in favour of general error; and those of less note, to justify themselves, say that such and such good men did the like. By what other steps could the people of Judah arise to that height of wickedness, as to give just ground for the prophet Isaiah to declare in the name of the Lord, "None calleth for justice, nor any pleadeth for truth," or for the Almighty to call upon the great city of Jerusalem, just before the Babylonish captivity,

* Lam. iv. 1.

"If ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth.—I will pardon it." The prospect of a road lying open to the same degeneracy, in some parts of this newly settled land of America, in respect to our conduct towards the negroes, hath deeply bowed my mind in this journey: and though, to relate briefly how these people are treated, is no agreeable work, yet, after often reading over the notes I made as I travelled, I find my mind engaged to preserve them.

Many of the white people in these provinces take little or no care of negro marriages; and when negroes marry after their own way, some make so little account of those marriages, that, with views of outward interest, they often part men from their wives, by selling them far asunder; which is common when estates are sold by executors at vendue. Many, whose labour is heavy, being followed at their business in the field by a man with a whip, hired for that purpose, have in common little else allowed but one peck of Indian corn, and some salt, for one week, with a few potatoes. (The potatoes they commonly raise by their labour on the first day of the week.) The correction ensuing on their disobedience to overseers, or slothfulness in business, is often very severe, and sometimes desperate. Men and women have many times scarce clothes enough to hide their nakedness; and boys and girls, ten and twelve years old, are often quite naked amongst their master's children. Some use endeavours to instruct those (negro children) they have in reading; but in common this is not only neglected, but disapproved.

These are the people by whose labour the

other inhabitants are in a great measure supported, and many of them in the luxuries of life;—these are the people who have made no agreement to serve us, and who have not forfeited their liberty (that we know of);—these are the souls for whom Christ died!—and for our conduct towards them *we* must answer, before Him who is no respecter of persons. They who know the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom He hath sent, and are thus acquainted with the merciful, benevolent, Gospel spirit, will therein perceive that the indignation of God is kindled against oppression and cruelty; and in beholding the great distress of so numerous a people, will find cause for mourning!"

The friends it is well known, cleared their own hands of the practice of slavery, and ultimately came forward in a body to act as its determined and strenuous opposers. Let us now return to the views of John Woolman on some other subjects.

"Until this year, 1756, I continued to retail goods, besides following my trade as a tailor; about which time, I grew uneasy on account of my business growing too cumbersome: I had begun with selling trimmings for garments, and from thence proceeded to sell cloths and linens; and, at length, having got a considerable shop of goods, my trade increased every year, and the road to large business appeared open; but I felt a stop in my mind.

Through the mercies of the Almighty, I had, in a good degree, learned to be content with a plain way of living: I had but a small family; and, on serious consideration, I believed truth

did not require me to engage much in cumbering affairs. It had been my general practice to buy and sell things really useful: things that served chiefly to please the vain mind in people, I was not easy to trade in; seldom did it; and, whenever I did, I found it weaken me as a Christian.

The increase of business became my burthen; for, though my natural inclination was toward merchandize, yet I believed truth required me to live more free from outward cumbers; and there was now a strife in my mind between the two; and in this exercise my prayers were put up to the Lord, who graciously heard me, and gave me a heart resigned to his holy will. Then I lessened my outward business; and, as I had opportunity, told my customers of my intention, that they might consider what shop to turn to, and, in a while, wholly laid down merchandize, following my trade as a tailor, myself only, having no apprentice. I also had a nursery of apple trees; in which I employed some of my time in hoeing, grafting, trimming, and inoculating. In merchandize it is the custom, where I lived, to sell chiefly on credit, and poor people often get in debt; and when payment is expected, not having wherewith to pay, their creditors often sue for it at law. Having often observed occurrences of this kind, I found it good for me to advise poor people to take such goods as were most useful and not costly.

In the time of trading, I had an opportunity of seeing, that the too liberal use of spirituous liquors, and the custom of wearing too costly apparel, led some people into great inconveniences; and these two things appear to be often connected; for, by not attending to that use of things which is consistent with universal righte-

ousness, there is an increase of labour which extends beyond what our heavenly Father intends for us; and by great labour, and often by much sweating, there is, even among such as are not drunkards, a craving of some liquors to revive the spirits; that, partly by the luxurious drinking of some, and partly by the drinking of others, led to it through immoderate labour, very great quantities of rum are every year expended in our colonies; the greater part of which we should have no need of, did we steadily attend to pure wisdom.

Where men take pleasure in feeling their minds elevated by strong drink, and so indulge their appetite as to disorder their understandings, neglect their duty as members in a family or civil society, and cast off all regard to religion, their case is much to be pitied; and where such, whose lives are for the most part regular, and whose examples have a strong influence on the minds of others, adhere to some customs which powerfully draw to the use of more strong liquor than pure wisdom allows; this also, as it hinders the spreading of the spirit of meekness, and strengthens the hands of the more excessive drinkers, is a case to be lamented.

As every degree of luxury hath some connexion with evil, those who profess to be disciples of Christ, and are looked upon as leaders of the people, should have that mind in them which was also in Christ, and so stand separate from every wrong way, as a means of help to the weaker. As I have sometimes been much spent in the heat, and taken spirits to revive me, I have found, by experience, that in such circumstances the mind is not so calm, nor so fitly disposed for divine meditation, as when all such extremes are avoided; and I have felt an increasing care to

attend to that holy Spirit which sets bounds to our desires, and leads those, who faithfully follow it, to apply all the gifts of Divine providence to the purposes for which they were intended. Did such as have the care of great estates, attend with singleness of heart to this heavenly instructor, which so opens and enlarges the mind, that men love their neighbours as themselves, they would have wisdom given them to manage, without finding occasion to employ some people in the luxuries of life, or to make it necessary for others to labour too hard; but, for want of steadily regarding this principle of divine love, a selfish spirit takes place in the minds of people, which is attended with darkness and manifold confusion in the world."

"In the fall of this year, (1764,) having hired a man to work, I perceived in conversation that he had been a soldier in the late war on this continent; and in the evening, giving a narration of his captivity among the Indians, he informed me that he saw two of his fellow captives tortured to death in a very cruel manner.

This relation affected me with sadness, under which I went to bed; and the next morning, soon after I awoke, a fresh and living sense of Divine love was spread over my mind; in which I had a renewed prospect of the nature of that wisdom from above, which leads to a right use of all gifts, both spiritual and temporal, and gives content therein: under a feeling thereof, I wrote as follows:

Hath He, who gave me a being, attended with many wants unknown to brute creatures, given me a capacity superior to theirs; and shewn me, that a moderate application to business is proper to my present condition; and that

this, attended with his blessing, may supply all outward wants, while they remain within the bounds he hath fixed: and no imaginary wants, proceeding from an evil spirit, have any place in me? Attend, then, O my soul! to this pure wisdom, as thy sure conductor through the manifold dangers of the world.

Doth pride lead to vanity? Doth vanity form imaginary wants? Do these wants prompt men to exert their power in requiring that of others, which they themselves would rather be excused from, were the same required of them? Do these proceedings beget hard thoughts? Do hard thoughts, when ripe, become malice? Does malice, when ripe, become revengeful? and in the end, inflict terrible pains on their fellow-creatures, and spread desolation in the world?

Do mankind walking in uprightness, delight in each other's happiness? And do these creatures, capable of this attainment, by giving way to an evil spirit, employ their wit and strength to afflict and destroy one another? Remember, then, O my soul; the quietude of those in whom Christ governs, and in all thy proceedings feel after it.

Doth he condescend to bless thee with his presence; to move and influence to action; to dwell in thee, and walk in thee? Remember then thy station, as a being sacred to God; accept of the strength freely offered thee; and take heed that no weakness, in conforming to expensive, unwise, and hard-hearted customs, gendering to discord and strife, be given way to. Doth he claim my body as his Temple, and graciously grant that I may be sacred to him? O! that I may prize this favour; and that my whole life may be conformable to this character!"

In the year 1763, John Woolman made a journey with considerable inconvenience and danger, to visit, in the love of the gospel, the Indian natives at Wehaloosing, a settlement on the Susquehannah, two hundred miles from Philadelphia, where at that time they were religiously disposed. He was preserved to return in safety to his family: and has left in his journal an interesting account of his proceedings. After other travels on the continent of America, and a continuance of patient labour in the cause of universal truth and justice, he came in 1772, with the approbation of his friends, to pay a religious visit to the Society in the northern part of England. Here the great Master, whom he had endeavoured faithfully to serve, was pleased to call him, as it appears, with his loins girded about,* and his light burning, to his everlasting reward.

The circumstances of his end may be suitably introduced by some reflections, which he wrote shortly before it, on his own state and proceedings as a minister of the gospel.

"On this visit to England I have felt some instructions sealed on my mind, which I am concerned to leave in writing, for the use of such as are called to the station of a minister of Christ. Christ being the Prince of Peace, and we being no more than ministers, I find it necessary for us, not only to feel a concern in our first going forth, but to experience the renewings thereof, in the appointment of meetings.

I felt a concern, in America, to prepare for this voyage; and being, through the mercy of God, brought safe here, my heart was like a vessel that wanted vent; and, for several weeks, at first, when my mouth was opened in meetings,

* Luke xii. 35.

it often felt like the raising of a gate in a water-course, where a weight of water lay upon it; and in these labours there appeared a fresh visitation to many, especially the youth; but sometimes, after this, I felt empty and poor, and yet felt a necessity to appoint meetings. In this state I was exercised to abide in the pure life of truth; and, in all my labours, to watch diligently against the motions of self in my own mind.

I have frequently felt a necessity to stand up, when the spring of the ministry was low; and to speak from the necessity, in that which subjecteth the will of the creature; and herein I was united with the suffering seed, and found inward sweetness with these mortifying labours.

As I have been preserved in a watchful attention to the divine leader, under these dispensations, enlargement at times hath followed, and the power of truth hath risen higher, in some meetings, than I ever knew it before through me.

Thus I have been more and more instructed, as to the necessity of depending, not upon a concern which I felt in America, to come on a visit to England, but upon the fresh instructions of Christ, the Prince of Peace, from day to day.

The gift is pure; and, while the eye is single in attending thereto, the understanding is preserved clear: self is kept out. We rejoice in filling up that which remains of the afflictions of Christ, for his body's sake, which is the Church.

The natural man loveth eloquence, and many love to hear eloquent orations; and if there is not a careful attention to the gift, men, who have once laboured in the pure gospel mi-

nistry, growing weary of suffering, and ashamed of appearing weak, may kindle a fire, compass themselves about with sparks, and walk in the light,* not of Christ, who is under suffering; but of that fire, which they, going from the gift, have kindled; and that in hearers, which is gone from the meek, suffering state, into the worldly wisdom, may be warmed with this fire, and speak highly of these labours. That which is of God gathers to God; and that which is of the world is owned by the world.

In this journey a labour hath attended my mind, that the ministers amongst us may be preserved in the meek, feeling life of truth, where we have no desire but to follow Christ, and be with him; that, when he is under suffering, we may suffer with him, and never desire to rise up in dominion, but as he, by the virtue of his own Spirit, may raise us."

A few days after writing these considerations, John Woolman in the course of his religious visits, came to the city of York, and was taken ill of the small-pox. The Friends, who attended him, preserved minutes of the following expressions in the time of his sickness:

On First-day, the 27th of the ninth month 1772, his disorder appeared to be the small-pox.

Second-day, He said he felt the disorder to affect his head, so that he could think little, and but as a child.

Third-day, he uttered the following prayer: "O Lord, my God! the amazing horrors of darkness were gathered around me and covered me all over, and I saw no way to go forth; I felt

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* Isa. l. 11.

the depth and extent of the misery of my fellow creatures separated from the divine harmony, and it was heavier than I could bear, and I was crushed down under it; I lifted up my hand, I stretched out my arm, but there was none to help me; I looked round about and was amazed; in the depths of misery, O Lord! I remembered that thou art omnipotent, that I had called thee Father, and I felt that I loved thee, and I was made quiet in thy will, and I waited for deliverance from thee; thou hadst pity upon me when no man could help me: I saw that meekness under suffering was shewed to us in the most affecting example of thy Son, and thou taughtest me to follow him, and I said,—Thy will, O Father! be done.

Fourth-day morning, being asked how he felt himself, he meekly answered, I do not know that I have slept this night, I feel the disorder making its progress, but my mind is mercifully preserved in stillness and peace. Some time after he said he was sensible the pains of death must be hard to bear; but, if he escaped them now, he must some time pass through them, and he did not know that he could be better prepared, but he had no will in it. He said he had settled his outward affairs to his mind, had taken leave of his wife and family as never to return, leaving them to the divine protection: adding, and though I feel them near to me at this time, yet I freely give them up, having a hope that they will be provided for. And a little after said, This trial is made easier than I could have thought, my will being wholly taken away: for if I were anxious for the event, it would have been harder; but I am not, and my mind enjoys a perfect calm.

In the night, a young woman having given him something to drink, he said, My child, thou seemest very kind to me, a poor creature, the Lord will reward thee for it. A while after he cried out with great earnestness of spirit, O my Father! my Father! and soon after he said, O my Father! my Father! how comfortable art thou to my soul in this trying season! Being asked if he would take a little nourishment, after some pause he replied, My child, I cannot tell what to say to it; I seem nearly arrived where my soul shall have rest from all its troubles.

After giving in something to be inserted in his journal, he said, I believe the Lord will now excuse me from exercises of this kind; and I see no work but one, which is to be the last wrought by me in this world; the messenger will come that will release me from all these troubles; but it must be in the Lord's time, which I am waiting for. He said he had laboured to do whatever was required, according to the ability received, in the remembrance of which he had peace; and, though the disorder was strong at times, and would, like a whirlwind, come over his mind, yet it had hitherto been kept steady, and centred in everlasting love; adding, and if that be mercifully continued, I ask or desire no more.

Fifth-day night, having repeatedly consented to take medicine with a view to settle his stomach, but without effect; the friend then waiting on him, said, through distress, What shall I do now? He answered with great composure, Rejoice evermore, and in every thing give thanks: but, added a little after, This is sometimes hard to come at.

Sixth-day morning, he broke forth early in

supplication on this wise: O Lord! it was thy power that enabled me to forsake sin in my youth, and I have felt thy bruises for disobedience; but, as I bowed under them, thou didst heal me, continuing a father and a friend: I feel thy power now, and I beg that, in the approaching trying moment, thou will keep my heart stedfast unto thee.

Upon his giving directions unto a friend concerning some little things, she said, I will take care, but hope thou wilt live to order them thyself. He replied, My hope is in Christ; and though I may seem a little better, a change in the disorder may soon happen, and my little strength be dissolved; and, if it so happen, I shall be gathered to my everlasting rest. On her saying she did not doubt that, but could not help mourning to see so many faithful servants removed at so low a time, he said, All good cometh from the Lord, whose power is the same, and who can work as he sees best. The same day he had given directions about wrapping his corpse, perceiving a friend to weep, he said, I would rather thou wouldest guard against weeping for me, my sister; I sorrow not, though I have had some painful conflicts; but now they seem over, and matters well settled, and I look at the face of my dear Redeemer; for sweet is his voice, and his countenance is comely.

First-day, fourth of tenth month, being very weak, and in general difficult to be understood, he uttered a few words in commemoration of the Lord's goodness, and added, How tenderly have I been waited on in this time of affliction! in which I may say, in Job's words, tedious days and wearisome nights are appointed unto me: And how many are spending their time and money in

vanity and superfluities; while thousands and tens of thousands want the necessaries of life, who might be relieved by them, and their distresses, at such a time as this, in some degree softened, by administering suitable things!

Second-day morning, the apothecary, who appeared very anxious to assist him, being present, he queried about the probability of such a load of matter being thrown off his weak body; and the apothecary making some remarks, implying he thought it might, he spoke with an audible voice on this wise:—My dependance is on the Lord Jesus, who, I trust, will forgive my sins, which is all I hope for; and if it be his will to raise up this body again, I am content: and if to die, I am resigned; and, if thou canst not be easy without trying to assist nature, I submit. After which, his throat was so much affected that it was very difficult for him to speak so as to be understood: and he frequently wrote when he wanted any thing. About the second hour, on fourth-day morning, he asked for pen and ink, and at several times, with much difficulty, wrote thus: "I believe my being here is in the wisdom of Christ; I know not as to life or death."

About a quarter before six, the same morning, he seemed to fall into an easy sleep, which continued about half an hour; when, seeming to awake, he breathed a few times with more difficulty, and expired, without sigh, groan, or struggle.

Such was the end of John Woolman. He died in his fifty second year; having occupied, for somewhat more than thirty years, the station of a minister in the religious society in which he was educated, and having undoubtedly been,

in this capacity also, an instrument of much good. What he was, he was by the Grace of God. Let us now, Reader! turn back to his beginning, and trace, as we proposed, the path which led him to the works and rewards of Christian dedication. We see him then, first, in his very tender years, visited by Divine love, and under the secret call of the Word conveyed through Holy Scripture, aspiring after purity of heart and conduct. We find these good desires, the fruits of Grace, cherished by the timely care and instruction of pious parents: while the contrary propensities, leading to evil, are (again both immediately and instrumentally) met by reproof. We behold him, next, growing up to manhood under the discipline of the cross of Christ; often tempted and giving way to youthful vanities—as often revisited and recovered by the Spirit of grace. At length, his will being subjected to the will of God, peace of mind ensues, and his religious principles are formed, under the influence of that Wisdom which, being *first pure*, then peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated, shows itself, finally, to be without partiality and without hypocrisy, *full of mercy* and of good fruits.* Finally (and let it be especially noted) we find him, from first to last, in the frequent practice of prayer; retiring when affected with a sense of the corruption of his nature, to some lonely place, there confessing his sins to God, and humbly craving his help to forsake them. Strength is mercifully granted, and, now, he stands firm—not in self-confidence, and the security of human attainments, but in dependance on the Lord Jesus

* James iii. 17

Christ; and in his last hours referring all to his will and wisdom.

Reader! art thou, too, convinced of the purity of Christ's kingdom, and of the corruptness of thy own heart? Go, and do likewise. Confess thy sins to God, and pray to him, as thou art enabled and drawn thereunto by the Spirit of his Son Jesus Christ. Then will he do for thee as for this his servant—yea, though thy sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow, and though they be red like crimson, yet shall they be as wool.*

* Isa. i. 18.

FINIS.

The Works of John Woolman, annexed to the Edition of his Journal, printed in 1794, comprise,

1. Some Considerations on the keeping of Negroes; in two Parts.
2. Considerations on pure Wisdom and human Policy, on Labour, on Schools, and on the right use of the Lord's outward Gifts.
3. Considerations on the true Harmony of Mankind, and how it is to be maintained.
4. Remarks on sundry Subjects.
5. An Epistle to the Quarterly and Monthly Meetings of Friends.
6. A Word of Remembrance and Caution to the Rich.

W. and S. Graves, Printers,
Sherborne Lane, London.

COMFORT & COUNSEL

UNDER

AFFLICTION.

Extracted from a Treatise originally written in German, and first printed in English in 1550.

"From the Flame's refining power,
More pure the gold of Ophir flows;
From Affliction's fiery hour,
More bright the Christian's virtue glows."

GISBORNE.

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COLLECTION DE CONTES.

Advertisement.

The Extracts contained in the following pages are selected from a Treatise originally written in German, translated into English by Miles Coverdale, and first printed in the latter language in the year 1550, *during the reign of Edward the Sixth, under the title of "A Spiritual and most preciouse Perle," &c. The circumstances which gave rise to the printing of the translation are too remarkable to be passed over unnoticed. A manuscript copy of it had fallen into the hands of the King's uncle, the Duke of Somerset, during his first imprisonment in the Tower, and was the means of so much consolation to his mind, that, after being released, he thought it incumbent upon him to cause it to be made public for the benefit of others, and prefixed an interesting address to the reader. It is not intended here to enter into an inquiry respecting the character or conduct of the duke, who, as is well known, was, after no long interval, a second time imprisoned, and subsequently beheaded; but the motive for the publication reflects*

so much credit on his feelings at the time, that it would hardly be doing justice to omit the mention of it in his own words. Towards the close of the before-mentioned address to the reader, this person so high in secular rank, and who, as Protector of the Kingdom, had been in possession of power scarcely less than regal, expresses himself thus:—

"It is read in histories, that the manner among the old Egyptians or Assyrians was, when any were sick to lay him abroad, that every man that passed by might tell, if he had been vexed with such-like sickness, what thing that was that did cure and heal him, and so they might use it to the patient. And by this means it is thought, that the science of physic was first found out: so that it may appear, that this readiness for to teach another that thing wherein a man feeleth ease of grief, is not only Christian, but also natural.

"In our great trouble, which of late did happen unto us, (as all the world doth know,) when it pleased God for a time to attempt us with his scourge, and to prove if we loved him, in reading this book we did find great comfort, and an inward and godly working power, much relieving the grief of our minds. The which things now calling to remembrance, we do think it our duty not to be more unnatural, than the old Egyptians were; but rather, as the office of a Christian is, to be ready to help all men by all ways possible that we can, and specially those that be afflicted.

" And hereupon we have required him, of whom we had the copy of this book, to set it forth in print, that not only we, or one or two more, but all that be afflicted, may take profit and consolation, if they will; yea, and they that be not afflicted, may either see what they should have done in their trouble, or what hereafter they ought to do, if any like happeneth unto them; knowing certainly, that such is the uncertainty of the world and all human things, that no man standeth so sure, but the tempest of affliction and adversity may overtake him, and if the grace of God do not singularly help him, cast him down, and make him fall."

In offering this selection to the reader of the present day, the Editors do not claim attention to it as an object of curiosity: they wish to recommend it on higher ground. They trust it will be found, that the following pages point out the genuine sources of Christian consolation, and also contain seasonable advice and caution to those to whom affliction is dispensed. The style, simple and familiar, according to the manner of the age, will in general, notwithstanding the occurrence of some obsolete expression, be unattended with difficulty; and they may observe that varying as it does from modern phraseology, it may occasionly be the more impressive on the memory; for the same reason that a sentiment which we read in an ancient or foreign language, sometimes strikes us more forcibly, than when expressed in our own.

It is proper to add, that the edition of the year 1550 *having become extremely scarce, a reprint of it was published in* 1812*, and that it is from this, the present extracts are taken.*

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* By Longman and Co. London.

COMFORT AND COUNSEL,

&c.

Of the purposes for which trouble and afflictions are sent or permitted; with divers observations on the advantages and profitable use of them.

I CALL all that trouble and affliction, whatsoever is reputed to be contrary to the desire and appetite of man's nature; as the unquiet suggestions of the flesh, the temptations of the devil, sickness of body, a wicked and froward mate in matrimony, to have disobedient children, unkind and unthankful friends, loss of goods, to be deprived of any old liberty or privilege, loss or blemish of name and fame, the malice and displeasure of men, hunger, dearth, pestilence, war, imprisonment, and death. And in this register do I put all kinds of crosses and afflictions, whether they be bodily or spiritual, our own or our friends', private and singular or universal and general, privy and secret or open and manifest, deserved or undeserved.

In all such things, I say every Christian man ought first of all to consider the very root, ground, and beginning, after this wise: that all things, whatsoever God sendeth, we ought to

take and receive them patiently. For this is once true, that God is our creator and Maker, and we his workmanship: he is our King, our Lord and Father; and like as it is not seeming that the pot should murmer against the pot-maker, (Isa. xlv. lxiv. Jer. xviii.) even so is it much less convenient, that we should murmur against God's will and judgment.

And to speak properly concerning safeguard, it is all one (so that we tempt not God) whether we live in poverty or in riches, in the fire or in the water, among our enemies, or among our friends, seeing that God seeth, knoweth, disposeth, and ruleth all things, as witnesseth the first book of the Kings. The Lord bringeth to death, and restoreth again unto life; bringeth into the grave, and raiseth up again; putteth down and exalteth also. And Job also testifieth in his misery: The Lord hath given it, and the Lord hath taken it again. And Christ saith, There falleth not a sparrow upon the earth without your Father's will, yea, the hairs of your head are all numbered. (Luke xii.)

And again, we ought to humble and submit our hearts and minds unto the obedience of God, and to suffer him to work with us according unto his most holy will and pleasure. No man ought to be unwilling or discontent to render again that talent or pledge that was committed to him only to serve and keep. (Matt. xxv.) It is that God that giveth us life, health of body, strength, wife, children, friends, riches, honour, power authority, peace, rest, and quietness, for a time, so long as pleaseth him. Now, if the same God will take again some of these things or all, he taketh nothing but his own, and even that which we did owe unto him; for the which cause to murmer

against his will, and to strive against his judgment, cannot but be a heinous and grievous sin.

Howsoever or by what manner of means it be that God punisheth and correcteth us, he doeth it not because he hateth us, as though he would utterly refuse and cast us away: but of very pity and compassion, only to receive us as his children; to keep and preserve us, to exercise and practise us, to humble and to bring us down, and to stir and prick us forward; that prayer, faith, the fear of God, obedience, and other virtues, may increase in us, to his honour and our salvation.

Testimonies for this have we, first: "As truly as I live, I have no pleasure in the death of the sinner, but that he turn and live." (Ezek. xxxiii.) "Whom the Lord loveth, him doth he chasten, and yet notwithstanding he hath pleasure in him, as a Father in his child." (Prov. iii.)

Again, the church of Christ, that is to say, the Christian congregation, which is Christ's spouse, must suffer vexation and affliction here upon earth.

But, forasmuch as God loveth this spouse of his Son, namely, the congregation of the faithful, and mindeth to comfort her, and to be most beneficial unto her; therefore like as he hath raised up Christ her bridegroom, head, and king, from death, even so will he also deliver her from all affliction, and give her a joyful victory of all such things as do oppress her.

Christ, with and through his passion and affliction, hath blessed and sanctified all manner of afflictions, that they all should serve and redound unto all faithful Christians for their

greatest wealth, by the ordinance and provision of God, their heavenly Father. Oh! if we could feel, behold, and consider the heart and mind of Christ, when he did willingly hang upon the cross, and suffered himself so cruelly and painfully to be tormented——that he might utterly take away the whole strength of all our sins, sorrow, and death,——that none of them should hurt us. And again, that he tasted and drank of the cup before us, that we being sick and weak, might the rather drink and taste of it after him, forasmuch as no evil mis-happened unto him thereof, but he immediately rose up again from death. Oh! if the knowledge and remembrance of this might remain in our hearts upright, and shine continually before us, then should we never sink or faint; nor yet despair of the mercy and goodness of God, although we ourselves should taste [of the] punishment that our sins have deserved: then should we be able to stand stiffly against the gates of hell; and all manner of sorrow, heaviness, temptation, fear, and misfortune, would thereby be utterly consumed and swallowed up.

And even this is the highest and most special comfort that ever was heard or read of from the beginning of the world. He only is alone sufficient (if we consider him and take hold of him as we should do) to plant and graft such a mind in us, that we shall [even] triumph and rejoice in and of our misery and affliction, as Paul triumphed excellently and highly, where he saith, If God hath not spared his only Son, but hath given him up for us all, how should he not give us all things with him? (Rom. viii.)

Trouble and afflictions do prove, try, instruct,

confirm and strengthen the faith; provoke and stir up prayer, drive and force us to amendment of life, to the fear of God, to meekness, to patience, to constancy, to gentleness, to soberness, and temperance, and to all manner of virtues; and are the occasion of exceeding much good, as well transitory as eternal, in this world as in the world to come. By affliction and trouble will God prove and assay, how deep thy heart hath entered with God, how much thy faith is able to suffer and to bear, whether thou canst forsake both thyself, and all other creatures in the world, for his sake.

Besides this, it is a profitable and a good thing for a man to know himself well.

Felicity and prosperity blind a man: but when he is under the cross, he beginneth to mark the frailness of his body, the uncertainty of his life, the feebleness of his understanding, the infirmity and weakness of his own strength and power.

He shall perceive how far he is entered in the way of virtue, how the matter standeth between God and him, whether he be a champion of God or of the devil; for a man thinketh himself oftimes to be well grounded and established; but in the time of temptation he feeleth how lightly and easily he is tossed and turned of every blast of the wind.

By affliction and misfortune God will put thee in remembrance, how many thousand perils are yet hanging over thy head, which would fall upon thee, if he did not keep and preserve thee from them. And the same God saith thus unto thee; The wicked enemy, with innumerable evils and mischiefs, doth assault thee, and lay watch for to subdue thee, and to swallow thee

up; but I have appointed him his bounds, over which he cannot pass.

God giveth us great and marvellous occasion, through trouble and adversity, to awake, stir up, and to exercise our faith. And by such exercise is the faith increased and confirmed; yea, and shineth more brightly, and is made more beautiful and glorious. For whatsoever a man hath proved and tried himself, then believeth he afterward the more steadfastly. Now he that is a Christian proveth and feeleth indeed, that in the midst of his sorrow and affliction, he is ruled, defended, comforted, and preserved of God; for hope cannot be confounded. And therefore the Christian and the faithful man, through trouble and adversity, is made more bold and hearty, and concludeth with himself, more than ever he did before, that God hath a special regard and consideration of those that are in trouble and misery, and will graciously help and deliver them.

Like as one that hath sailed oft upon the sea, and proved and escaped great and dangerous tempests, and hath been sore tossed with the fearful waves, is afterward the more bold and hardy to go unto the sea, forasmuch as he hath ever escaped well; even so a Christian whom the cross hath oft assaulted and exercised, forasmuch as he hath always found comfort, aid, and help of God, afterward he trusteth God, the longer the more, though the same affliction and adversity come again unto him that he had before.

And to this purpose hear and mark two especial and notable examples: one out of the Old and another out of the New Testament. David, when he prepared himself to fight against the valiant giant Goliath, said these words: "The

Lord, that delivered me from a lion, and from a bear, shall deliver me also from this Philistine." (1 Sam. xvii.) And again, Paul saith, "God hath delivered us from so great a death, and delivereth us daily, and we hope that he will deliver us from henceforth also." (2 Cor. i.)

Every Christian knoweth this, that it is necessary and profitable for him to pray and to call upon God most fervently and devotedly. Now, when a man liveth in all prosperity, then he prayeth very little, or very slenderly and coldly; he hath no great affection or mind upon it.

But sorrow, heaviness, and adversity kindle the mind and set it on fire; drive, chase, and hunt it unto God, and compel it to call upon God fervently and earnestly: for at such time we feel and perceive well that we can do nothing of ourselves, and what great need we have of God, that he will vouchsafe to govern, aid, and defend us.

Pride is a dangerous thing, whereof cometh no manner of good. Now felicity and prosperity all at pleasure engender pride and contempt of other people; but the cross and affliction engender meekness and lowliness, that a man is not too proud in his own conceit, but is content that others be esteemed as well as he, confessing himself to have need of their help and counsel.

Like as men use to clip and to cut shorter the feathers of birds or other fowls, when they begin to fly too high or too far from them; even so doth God diminish our riches, possessions, estimation, honour, authority, and power, that we should not pass our bounds, and glory too much of such gifts. Like as the body, when it is

wearied and consumed with labour and travail, desireth ease and rest, that it may lie still: even so the soul, being laden and oppressed with trouble and affliction, is brought to a narrow issue, and then it hasteth after rest and quietness, and nothing vexeth it less than pride.

Nebuchadnezzar did glory of his power, victorious acts, and costly buildings, and was wonderfully proud of them; but after his fall and adversity, he learned to ascribe all praise, honour, and glory unto God. (Dan. iv.) Paul confesseth that a buffet was given him of the messenger of Satan, that he should not glory out of measure in the abundance of revelation. (2 Cor. xii.) Experience itself teacheth, that when rich, famous, notable, and proud men are robbed and spoiled of their goods, they are afterwards more humble, meek, and gentle; for then they perceive the uncertainty and unstableness of temporal and transitory things, and so learn, the longer they live, the less to trust themselves. Therefore trouble and affliction are ofttimes as necessary unto men as meat and drink. The cross, adversity, and affliction make a man soft, tame, patient, sober, loving, and friendly, both towards himself and others also.

An ox getteth himself harder hoofs upon rough, stubble, and crabbed ground, and is able to draw and to labour better, than if he were fed in rank pasture. Those children that are nursed by fostermen's fires, are for the most part more hard and strong than they which are daintily brought up in all excess, and wantonness, and superfluity, in their own fathers' houses. Even so the wits and minds of men, through pleasure and abundance, wax tender and weak, and effemi-

nate and wild; but being restrained through some painful necessity and affliction, they wax harder, stronger, and more manly and sober. For example: the dear holy Apostles, the more persecution and affliction they had, the more bold, strong, and constant were they, as the Acts of the Apostles do testify throughout. Paul saith, "I am content, and think myself well in infirmities, in rebukes, in persecutions, in anguishes, for Christ's sake: for when I am in such weakness, then am I strong." (2 Cor. xii.)

The trouble and adversity of the godly do give an exceeding great testimony unto thee of immortality, of a general judgment, and also of an everlasting life. For it is impossible that the best creatures only should be ordained and created to all sorrow and travail, and the most wicked and ungodly to escape and remain unpunished. It were directly against the righteousness of God.—Wherefore of necessity there must needs be another life to come, where every man shall receive according to the demerits of his life here upon earth. And again, the cross way is pointed to be the very right way unto eternal life. (Psalm xliv. Rom. viii. 2 Cor. iv.) Like as the corn is first thrashed, fanned, and rid from the chaff, and then laid up and reserved in the barn; even so Christian men upon earth are beaten, mis-handled, evil-treated, whereby they are purged of many wild and light manners, and so are brought into the everlasting barn of the kingdom of heaven.

The man that is sick must receive the purgation and medicine, how sour or bitter soever it be, that he may the sooner recover his health again, and not die: even so when we suffer the hand of God

to rule and order us, being content and patient therewith, although it smarteth and grieveth us, yet it shall profit and help us to everlasting health and soundness.

Testimonies and witness of Scripture to prove this: "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." (Matt. v.) "Narrow is the gate, and strait is the way that leadeth to life." (Matt. vii.) "Blessed are they that weep here, for they shall laugh; but wo unto you that be rich, &c." (Luke vi.) "We must enter into the kingdom of God through much trouble and affliction." (Acts xiv.) "If we be children, then are we heirs, namely, the heirs of God and fellow-heirs of Christ; so that we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified together with him." (Rom. viii.)

Hitherto have we treated of the corporal and spiritual, temporal and eternal, profit and commodity which Christians receive by the cross, trouble, and adversity. Which is not to be taken after this sense, as though the cross or adversity of itself and of its own nature, could bring and work such high commodities.—But the Spirit of God resteth secretly, and lieth hid in the faithful, under the shadow and bark of the cross, and purgeth, reformeth, comforteth, and strengtheneth them, and worketh all these foresaid commodities in them. Now, like as the holy Scripture attributeth a certain reward unto our good works, which works, notwithstanding, it is not we that work, but the Lord, which useth us as instruments of his: even so is the cross an instrument of God, whereby he sub-

dueth our flesh, keepeth us in the school of correction, and forceth us, as it were, by violence, from evil to goodness. (Philipp. ii. 2 Cor. i.) Now, wheresoever the Holy Ghost will take his resting-place, for the most part he sendeth before his purveyors and fore-runners, which are sorrow and affliction, trouble and adversity; that they may vex, cumber, humble, meeken, and utterly overthrow and bring down the heart of man, whereby the Holy Ghost may find the more place, and so work all goodness therein. And therefore whatsoever is hithereto spoken, especially of the spiritual commodities of the cross and adversity, it is and so remaineth all truth; SO THAT IT BE UNDERSTOOD OF THE FAITHFUL AND GODLY.—

By what natural means or ways trouble and adversity may be qualified and eased; but that the best and surest succour resteth only in the power, will, and goodness of God.

FIRST, no man ought to cast himself into peril and danger without any need: for that were as much as to tempt God. For the second point, like as a waterman will never let out his sail so far but that he may soon pull it in again: even so every man, as long as all things stand well and upright with them, let him foresee and prepare in time for the contrary. Thirdly, a great weight and substance of the matter depend upon this point, that a man conceive a right judgment and opinion of things. If a man esteem worldly goods for a light thing, (as they ought in very deed to be esteemed,) then can he forbear the same with the less grief and pain. Contrari-

wise, if he make a God of them, and esteem them highly, then he trembleth, quaketh, and taketh on unmeasurably, when he is spoiled and deprived of them.

In like manner in other things, a man oft-times fancieth and imagineth in himself that he can abide and suffer no manner of misfortune; when, if it were well considered, that present evil which is so feared would soon seem but a trifle and no misfortune, but rather a blessing. And though it be not light and small indeed, yet let [it] be esteemed and taken for light, forasmuch as it cometh alone, and bringeth not two, three, or a hundred companions with it.

As, thou hast peradventure a sickly and diseased body, but yet thy mind and heart are sound and strong: Or thou art vexed and cumbered in thy mind, yet hast thou a whole or a sound body: Or, peradventure thou art robbed, spoiled, and deprived of thy temporal and worldly goods, and other transitory pleasures; yet hast many and divers Christian virtues and singular gifts of grace: wherein is a thousand times more felicity than in health, beauty, strength, riches, friendship, wife, children, honour, dignity, or power; for this is not written in vain: O Lord the earth is full of thy goodness. (Psal. civ.)

Here should the mind that is vexed and cumbered, cease from the consideration of the present misery and affliction, and call to remembrance what other benefits of God do yet remain, or what other we have had, or at least what are yet to come and to happen to all faithful Christians. And therefore there is an old common proverb good to be remembered: In adversity remember prosperity; and again, in prosperity think upon adversity.

And be it in case that thy misery and misfortune continue a long while, yet is all manner of trouble that we suffer upon earth transitory, ever passing away, and not durable nor perpetual.

The length and process of time do mitigate, ease, assuage, and lighten all manner of smart, pain, or grief, if the mind be a while used unto it, and somewhat exercised and waxen hard in it. Yet such as be wise ought not to tarry till smart and grief wear and fret away of themselves; but to prevent the time by such means as we have hitherto taught, and hereafter shall follow.

Fourthly: ordinary means are not to be condemned, despised, or refused. Like as a shipmaster, being upon the water, and foreseeing a tempest to be at hand, calleth upon God's aid and help: and yet for all that he hath also a sure eye to the stern, to rule that as handsomely and cunningly as he can. (Acts xxvii.)

Even so in all manner of necessities and perils it is lawful, and men ought also, to use all manner of honest and convenient means;—so that no man build or trust in any manner of thing saving in the very living God only, who can help, deliver, and remedy all things, without any middle or mean, if there were none at hand. (Gen. iii. Matt. ix. 1 Sam. x.)

Fifthly: when a man waiteth, tendeth upon, and serveth his honest craft, science, vocation, or office, whereunto God hath called him; and studieth to execute, perform, and follow it diligently, as he ought to do, it driveth away many evil and vain fancies from a troubled mind, that is cumbered with any grief or affliction.

And especially for a man in his trouble to visit his special friends, or to be visited of them, bringeth a double comfort and easement unto his

sorrowful and unquiet mind. First, in declaring thy grief and disease unto thy friend, and opening thy whole heart, and pouring out thy whole mind before him, thou findest a singular easement in thy mind thereby. And again, a true and a faithful friend, through his pity and bemoaning of thee, helpeth thee, as it were, to bear the burthen: and although he can take away no part of the substance of thy sorrow, yet his good heart and will, and friendly words, are a great comfort unto thee.

Now will I open and declare, that God both can and will help and succour sufficiently for Christ's sake, in respect of whom he promised us all manner of help, aid, and comfort, and performeth it. And I will also shew by what means, and in what measure, he worketh the same.

God seeth and looketh upon us, how we stick and wrestle in peril and danger, and he knoweth best of all how and when to remedy, help, and deliver us, that his glory and our wealth [or good] may be most furthered. And he is not one that only knoweth all things, but he is also almighty, and can work and bring to pass all things. And if our affliction and adversity increase from day to day, the longer the worse: yet is God always a thousand times mightier and stronger than they. But so mighty cannot God be, but he is as gracious and merciful also, and hath a greater desire to shew and declare his true heart and love towards us, than we can wish or desire. And although he seemeth, in our sight, to take utterly away all manner of light of his grace out of our eyes, yet he remaineth gracious and favourable towards us privily, and, as it were,

in secret: and certainly he will not forsake us, give us over, nor suffer us to stick and continue in such heaviness and danger.—It is not possible that any man that taketh hold of Christ, him, can be oppressed or overthrown either of and hath sin, the devil, the world, or of all the creatures in heaven and earth; but shall continue and remain for ever under the wing and defence of God. (Rom. viii. Psal. xxxiv. Prov. xxiv.)

The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a contrite and broken heart, and will help them that have sorrowful and humble minds. (Psal. cxlvii.) He desireth me, and hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him. I am by him and with him in his trouble; I will bring him out, and set him in honour, &c. (Psal. xci.) Yea, when the sorrow and heaviness are at the highest, and every one of us thinketh that God hath utterly forsaken us, then is God most ready to help us, and his aid is most nigh unto us. Yea, and to speak certainly as the truth is, God comforteth us continually in the midst of all our troubles and heaviness, and is never from us. (Psal. xlvi. Matt. xxviii. John xiv.) For the faithful man hath in his heart the Spirit of God, the fountain and spring of the heavenly water, of the which he is evermore moistened, revived, and refreshed, to his singular comfort. (John iv.)

And the more our sorrow and adversity augment and increase, the greater aid and assistance shall we find and perceive. God will not suffer you to be tempted above your strength, but together with your temptation he will make a way out, that ye shall be able to bear it. (I Cor.

x. 2 Pet. ii.) By these words doth Paul teach very comfortably, that God will not tempt, test, nor assay us harder nor sorer than we may be able to bear.

As the afflictions of Christ are plentiful and abundant in us, even so is the consolation through Christ also plentiful and abundant. (2 Cor. i.) For example, the holy Apostles were so strengthened, that they rejoiced that they might suffer any thing for Christ's sake. (Acts iv. v.) And at this present day God sendeth more comfort than all devils and all the world are able to send heaviness, sorrow, and discomfort. Although in winter the trees appear not only unfruitful, but also utterly dead, yet the sun with his coming when the winter hath taken leave, doth so mollify, resolve, and warm both the earth itself and the trees that they bud out again, wax green, and bring forth fruit: even so, when the faithful are esteemed and seem as though they were deprived and destitute of all help, and utterly forsaken, yet doth the heavenly Spirit of God lighten, warm, and strengthen their hearts to all goodness.

And specially this is a comfortable thing, that all faithful and holy Christians upon earth have fellowship and participation together in all manner of things, both good and bad, as well the one as the other.—And furthermore, the whole congregation of Christ doth help me to bear my burthen. For they that are the members of one body, take care and sorrow one for another: if the sole of the foot be hurt, doth it not grieve the whole body? (1 Cor. xii.) Now St. Paul calleth all Christians one body, and also one bread. (1 Cor. x.) And therefore all other faithful Christians have compassion, and are

heavy and sorrowful for me; and whatsoever is light unto them, is also light unto me.

To be short, if there were not so many examples before our eyes, if we would but look a little backward, and consider how we have passed the time that is past, which surely hath been always full of great perils and dangers: we should be compelled to confess and grant, that the merciful goodness of God hath borne us in his bosom, and hath preserved us from divers dangers and perils, above all that ever we could think, imagine, or devise.

Now, if God hath thus holpen and delivered us many and divers ways, without any labour or study of ourselves, yea, without any manner of care or sorrow of our parts, when we neither knew nor thought that he was present with us, we must needs be very obstinate and dull, if we do not from henceforth, in any manner of trouble or necessity, cast our sorrow upon him, and suffer him to care for us; but we in such case, oh shame! begin to doubt and fear lest he hath already forsaken us, or will from henceforth give us over. (Psalm xxxv. Matt. vi. Luke xii. 1 Pet. v.)

If God of his love and free liberality giveth here, in this transitory life, health, strength, riches, friendship, power, authority, honour, and such-like, even unto the wicked and ungodly; why should not we conclude upon the same, that he will deal and distribute a thousand times higher and greater benefits unto the godly and right faithful Christians, although they neither see nor receive those gifts at the present instant?

Besides this, the Lord also comforteth us: if

God take care for the fowls of the air and the flowers of the field, and provide nourishment and clothing for them; truly he will deal as faithfully with us men, who excel many ways the fowls of the air and grass of the field. (Luke xii. Matt. vi. x.)

That we must direct our faith, hope, and confidence, towards God.—Of Prayer and Repentance.

If God be most victorious and invincible, and his dear beloved Son also an everlasting strength, that can never fail against the devil and the world; and again, both Christ and God himself, through faith, are ours, and dwell in us, (Eph. iii.); then there is no cause why the fearful Christian should fear either his own feeble flesh and body, or his weak and impotent age, or yet the whole power of the devil, though he be armed and weaponed with a thousand thousand crafts and subtleties. (1 Pet. v.)

For, if in God be all manner of joy, blessedness, and felicity, and we through faith do prove and find him a gracious and merciful God unto us, then may we lawfully rejoice in God, even in the midst of the highest sorrow and adversity: witness Psalm xxv. lv. There shall none be confounded and put to shame, that hopeth in thee. Cast thy care and sorrow upon the Lord, and he shall defend and sustain thee. What can be thought or imagined more sweet or comfortable?

For example: the heathenish woman of Canaan, all hope and comfort in the remedy and counsel of man set apart, desireth help and succour of Christ: (Matt. xv.) even so, hold thou on likewise, saying and crying still, "O thou Son of David, have mercy upon me." And so shalt thou hear at length this comfortable gospel and absolution: "Thy faith is great, be it unto thee as thou desirest."

The holy Scripture teacheth us in all manner of necessities, as well bodily as spiritual, to call upon God, and to flee unto him. And here doth it profit very much, if one be mindful of another in his prayer.

But what should a man pray for? First, and most specially, for remission of his sins; for when we have once obtained of God pardon of our sins, then certainly shall the sickness, adversity, or punishment either clearly cease, or else, through the gracious will and goodness of God, it shall redound to the furtherance of our salvation.

Secondarily: we must also pray either that God will help and deliver us, not after the device and fancy of our own brains, but after such wise as shall seem meet unto his Godly wisdom; or else that he will mitigate and ease our pain and punishment, that our weakness may not utterly faint and sink down to the bottom.

Like as a sick person, although he doubt nothing of the faithfulness, honesty, and tenderness of his physician or surgeon towards him, yet for all that desireth him to handle his wound, and to dress him, as easily and tenderly as is possible for him: even so in like manner may we call upon God, that if it be not against his honour

and glory, he will vouchsafe to give some mitigation and easement of the pain.

And specially let us desire of him to grant us strength that we faint not, nor be overcome with the fear or greatness of our sorrow and grief, whereby we might forsake him, and fall into some wickedness; but that we may rather, after the examples of the holy martyrs, suffer death and most intolerable torments, than either to forsake and deny our faith, or to do any manner of thing against the will of God. (Rom. viii.) And it is very expedient for us to pray, with the lost and desperate son, "I am no more worthy from henceforth to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants." (Luke xv.) I will with all my heart have sorrow and trouble upon earth, even as a labouring servant, that goeth for his hire, so that thou wilt but suffer me to dwell and remain in thy house for ever.

But now, how should we pray? St. James, in his first chapter, teacheth us, that we should pray in faith without wavering, and nothing doubt but that God doth mercifully hear us. We must continually look upon the promises of God, and have this always before our eyes, that we do not only seek help and remedy at his hands, but also hope and look surely for it, committing both body and soul with a good will unto him. (Matt. xxi. Mark xi.)

Call upon me in thy need, and I will help and deliver thee, and so shalt thou praise me. Let him call upon me, so will I hear him; I am by him in his trouble, I will deliver him, and bring him to honour. (Psalm xci.)

And again, "Verily, verily, I say unto you whatsoever you shall pray for unto the Father in my name, he shall give it unto you."

(John xiv.) For example: when Moses held up his hands unto God and prayed, his enemies, the Amalekites, were overcome. (Exod. xvii.) The two blind men who cried after the Lord, "O Son of David, have mercy upon us," were heard. (Matt. ix.) Of such-like examples are the Gospels full.

In trouble and adversity we ought to praise God, and to give him thanks that he hath not forgotten us, but through his fatherly visitation calleth and draweth us unto him, and graciously helpeth us to bear all manner of burthens: even so did Paul in his adversity praise God. (2 Cor. i.) "Praised be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercy, and God of all consolation, who comforteth us in all our troubles and afflictions."

Now there must go with all this, repentance, heaviness, and sorrow for the sins which we have committed in time past, amendment of life, the love of God, the fear of God, all virtue and godliness. Manasseh was sorry and penitent for his wicked life and cruel tyranny, and therefore did God deliver him out of the hands and captivity of the King of Babylon, and restored him again to his kingdom. (2 Kings xxi. 2 Chron. xxxiii.) By Jonah was it preached and proclaimed unto the great city of Nineveh, that God should destroy and overthrow it within forty days. The Ninevites believed this proclamation and preaching, and began to repent and amend their lives with a great and a singular humility and submission; and so God of his mercy spared them. (Jonah iii.)

Of Patience.

Among all other virtues, in adversity, patience is most necessary; not such a patience as to suffer all things to pass, whether they be good or bad, right or wrong: but when we are in trouble and adversity, and can avoid it by no lawful mean, whereas after the desire and lust of our flesh, we would murmur, forsake, and give over both God and all manner of righteousness; then to resist and strive against our afflictions and sorrowful thoughts, and, as a man would say, to spear up and to captivate and subdue our natural eyes, wit and reason, under and unto the obedience of God, yielding and submitting ourselves unto him, suffering whatsoever it be with a good and ready will, even though it were most bitter and cruel death, rather than we would swerve from the word of God, (Luke ix.); yea, and moreover, to praise God, and to give him thanks, that he will vouchsafe so fatherly to visit us, and that he hath not forgotten us.—This is called a right Christian patience; for it is God's precept and commandment, that we should not murmur when he chasteneth us; but that we should submit ourselves most humbly unto his holy will, and after a certain manner to wish, that is to say, willingly to suffer and bear, such punishment and correction whereby we remain and continue obedient unto his Godly righteousness. Murmur not, as certain murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. (1 Cor. x. Numb. xxi.)

And specially the unspeakable fidelity and love of God towards us, ought lawfully to move and persuade us to suffer God to work with us even

according to his will and pleasure; for by this means we give God this honour, that he doth us no wrong nor injury, but disposeth all things most wisely, and will direct them to a good end.

On the contrary part, the impatient man murmureth against God, and is angry with him, as though his judgments and works were not just and right, forasmuch as the wicked and ungodly live in pomp, pleasure, and all dissoluteness, and the virtuous and godly, in poverty, sorrow, and misery. He may peradventure fancy and imagine with himself, that God overchargeth his faithful children, and will suffer them to remain in peril, necessity, and danger, and will not hear them. (Psalm xxxvii.)

Moreover, we have an evident and perfect image and spectacle of all patience in our Lord Jesus Christ, as he himself pointed us unto himself, saying, "Whosoever will follow me, let him forsake himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." (Matt. xvi.) When his unspeakable martyrdom and passion began, he prayed, "O Father, if it be possible, take this cup from me: but thy will, and not mine, be done."

Print this well and surely in thy mind, that he did pray upon the cross for his greatest enemies, and said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." (Luke xxiii. Acts vii.)

Now if He, whom all angels and creatures in heaven and earth do behold and look upon, (Psalm xcvii. Heb. i.), yea, whom, they all must serve and fear, doth suffer innocently, undeserved, with all patience and meekness, more than ever any Christian was tempted with, it ought lawfully to make even

a heart of stone or iron to yearn and melt, and to take these small afflictions well deserved, most patiently and willingly, and to suffer and bear them most meekly.

And this practice did the holy elect of God in the old time not only inculcate and teach with words, but also express and perform in deed.

But now here might some man object and say, It is no marvel that the holy saints did suffer joyfully and boldly, for they did suffer innocently, unworthily, and without desert; but as for me, I must needs complain, that I am a wretched sinner, and that which I suffer is for my deserts and sins, so that I suffer worthily; and therefore my cross and affliction can in no wise be compared or likened unto the cross of the holy saints, &c. This objection may be answered in few words: The holy saints, every one of them, concerning themselves and their own nature, were miserable sinners; but again they were holy and righteous through Jesus Christ, who hath distributed and given unto them also, through true faith, his holiness and righteousness.

And again patience is exercised, proved, and made stronger through true faith. For whosoever knoweth, and is fully persuaded, that he hath a gracious and a merciful God, with whom after this miserable life he shall live everlastingly, the same shall suffer all manner of trouble and adversity patiently, Christianly, and thankfully.

Also Christian prayer is a great help and furtherance to patience; for in prayer we desire the sanctification of the name of God. Now is the name of God most praised and sanctified, when we, being in the highest danger and

necessity, do depend upon God (through faith and patience) as upon one that will dispose all things well, and to a good end.

Again, in prayer we desire that the kingdom of God may come unto us. (Matt. iv. Luke xi.) Now, if God will confound and destroy in us the kingdom of the devil and of the flesh, or else would utterly lead and draw us into his godly and heavenly kingdom, through the cross, were it not as much as to pray against ourselves, if we should be impatient under the same?

We pray, likewise, that God's will be done. Now if it be God's will, that we should have sorrow, trouble, and adversity upon earth, how dare or can we resist his will?

And therefore now will we declare by most sure and infallible reasons, by what means and ways a man may master and overcome his flesh in the time of the cross and affliction; and so shew and declare true and perfect patience.

Which virtue (like as all other) hath its first beginning and increase of the grace, power, and Spirit of God, without which we can work nothing that is good, neither resist or overcome any evil.

It is written, The victory consisteth not in the multitude of men, but the power and strength cometh from heaven. (1 Mic. iii.)

I am able to do all things through Him that maketh me mighty, which is Christ. (Phil. iv.) Wherefore, although my fleshly reason sinketh, wavereth, and faileth ever so much, yet doth God continually preserve and uphold my spirit, that it do not utterly faint, but continue prompt and willing till such time as it may be delivered and eased.

But now, how should we order and behave ourselves that God may grant us his strength, and true patience, and boldness? Forsooth, through faith, hope, prayer, love, true faithfulness, virtue, and godliness, we may obtain them of God.

In our Christian faith we confess and believe a holy universal Church, and that we have fellowship and participation with all saints and [the] elect of God; and also we confess and believe remission of sins, resurrection of the dead, and life everlasting. And Christ giveth unto every one that hath faith this absolution: Whosoever heareth my word, and believeth Him that hath sent me, the same hath everlasting life, and cometh not to judgment, but passeth through from death to life. (John v.) Wherefore through faith a man obtaineth power, strength, patience, constancy, and steadfastness in all goodness. (Rom. v. viii. Heb. x. xi.)

If strong and mighty enemies should come upon thee, assault and besiege thee, and thou hadst on thy side one whom thou knewest certainly to be a lord, and to have power over all thine enemies, thou mightest lawfully be bold, and without fear. Now have we (through faith) Christ on our side, who is Lord over all lords, who hath full power over prosperity and adversity.

Therefore thou must not long think and look upon the weakness of thy flesh, but thou must earnestly and diligently consider the mighty and true love of Jesus Christ, which both can and will comfort and rejoice thee more than all misfortune is able to discomfort thee, or to make thee heavy.

It is said to us, Your enemy the devil goeth about like a roaring lion, and seeketh whom he may devour; whom resist ye steadfastly with faith. (1 Pet. v.) St. James saith that your approved faith worketh patience. The holy and faithful Apostles did evidently declare, that, according to the inward man, it was a joy and comfort unto them to be beaten and scourged for the Lord's sake. Again: all trouble and affliction are grievous by reason of our weak faith, which is yet but little exercised, and hath not well and fully tasted the riches and treasures of the children of God.

Yet notwithstanding, no man ought to despair, though he have not a perfect, strong faith.

It happeneth oftentimes that the faith, being little and weak, in the time of necessity and affliction draweth back, and is like to a brand that hath but a little fire upon it, which the Lord Jesus will not quench, but increase, so that we do but pray with the dear Apostles and say, O Lord, strengthen our faith. (Isai. xlii. Matt. xii. Mark ix.)

But when a man is utterly destitute of faith, as he that knoweth of no other, or better life than this, it is no marvel at all, though he despair at length.

Yea, the more he trusteth in himself, or in any worldly and transitory thing, the more unable is he to resist and continue in trouble and adversity. (Acts iv. v.) For there is no right comfort or succour in any manner of thing besides the Lord Jesus.

There are two kinds of hope; the one is of nature, and the other cometh of faith. The natural hope is a special gift and benefit of God,

which, after a certain manner, doth help and comfort a man that is troubled and vexed, that he do not utterly despair; but in the midst of all adversity hopeth that in a while it will be better, and so waiteth and tarrieth till the adversity be over.

Now if this natural hope have such a strength and virtue, should not the other hope, which the Spirit of God doth newly inspire, through faith, work a much greater and more perfect patience and strength; that a man, in the midst of his cross, shall hope and wait for heavenly comfort and aid of God for Christ's sake? And, although the natural hope doth often fail and deceive, and is always uncertain, yet this Christian hope doth never fail nor deceive.

Furthermore, we must seek upon God fervently and without ceasing, through prayer, that he will give us a bold and a strong spirit to suffer all things, and to continue steadfast unto the end. (Matt. xxiv.) Thus doing, he will surely hear us most graciously, according to his promise, and faithfully give us his spiritual gifts.

Last of all, patience is profitable, and bringeth singular commodity, not only to him that hath the same virtue, but also to others: for when another perceiveth thee to be constant in the truth, he taketh occasion to exercise like patience and steadfastness. It is manifest by divers credible stories, when the Christians have died boldly for the Christian faith's sake, that certain of the persecutors have wondered so sore thereat, that they, by that and no other occasion, were converted to the faith of Christ.

Also, through our impatience in adversity, we give occasion to them that be weak in the faith

to doubt whether our faith be the true faith or no, when we confess of God that he is our comfort, both in this world and in the world to come, and yet shew ourselves so desperate in adversity, as though God had utterely forsaken us.

Wherefore we ought to prepare ourselves for all adversity in time of prosperity, and not to hang upon transitory things, that when need shall require, we may be content to forego them, and continue steadfast in the true faith, wherein whosoever shall continue unto the end, shall be saved.

FINIS.

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SOME

OBSERVATIONS

ON

Christ's Sermon

ON THE

MOUNT.

EXTRACTED FROM THE WRITINGS OF

THOMAS CHALKLEY.

If ye love me, keep my commandments.—John xiv. 15.
Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.
Ibid. xv. 14

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Advertisement.

THOMAS CHALKLEY was born in Southwark, in the Year 1675, *of parents who were members of the religious society of Friends. He removed, early in life, to Pennsylvania, was an approved minister of the Gospel in the said Society, and performed several laborious journeys in that service. Being also industrious for the support of his family, in his outward business, which consisted chiefly in trading by sea, he made many voyages to the West-Indies and to Britain. When at sea, he appears to have exercised a religious care over those who sailed with him, often collecting the ship's company for the public worship of God, and he succeeded (as it is presumed those who make the attempt in a right disposition generally may) in repressing among his sailors the too common practice of profane swearing. Of the manner in which his leisure was employed, the following Tract is a specimen, the piece from which it was taken having been written at sea, on a voyage from Barbadoes to England, in* 1718. *As exhibiting the practical thoughts of a sincere though plain Christian, on a series of important texts, it is offered to the candid notice of the reader.*

SOME OBSERVATIONS,

&c.

CHRIST being the great Author of the Christian religion, I have thought to make some observations on his sermon which he preached on the Mount, which might be acceptable to some of his followers; especially such as desire to fulfil his holy will, and not to rest satisfied in a form and shew only of his religion.

Also considering that it is the greatest collection of his words left us in the New Testament by the Evangelists, in any one place, I was in hopes that some observations thereon might tend to promote the reading of it in the Holy Scriptures. This holy sermon, if Christians would walk according to it, might and would help to heal their differences, and to soften them in their sentiments one of another. And it is to be believed and hoped, that all parties will confess, that the doctrine in this sermon is good, and ought to be promoted amongst all who profess the worthy name of the Lord Jesus, and whoever walks contrary to this rule must needs be in the wrong.

But the greatest end I had in this undertaking was, that the professors of the name of the Holy Jesus might live and walk in his

truth, and in the doctrine which he has there laid down for his followers to practice; and that in so doing, they might have peace to their souls here, and rest in the kingdom of glory for ever.

Matt. v. 1, 2. "And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain; and when he was set, his disciples came unto him: and he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying," &c.

Our Lord seeing the multitudes, for the advancing his Father's glory, his own kingdom, and the good of souls, went up into the mountain, and sat in the power of the Father: and when so sat down, his disciples came unto him: and as his disciples then personally came unto him, so now we ought to come to him in spirit; and then, when but two or three are so come to him, he is as really present spiritually, as he was personally on the Mount. And as this meeting in the Mount was powerful and glorious, so will all those be, in measure, where Jesus is really present in Spirit.

Verse 3. "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven."

It is a safe and blessed state to be truly and spiritually poor, and to be rightly sensible of it before the Most High; for then we are nothing, nor have any thing but from the Lord; and without him man sees himself undone, his soul must starve, he must go naked, if the Almighty do not feed him and clothe him; and when men see themselves poor and wretched, miserable, blind, and naked, without Christ, notwithstanding all the fine things they may enjoy in this world, which is of a fading nature, Oh! then how the soul cries, how it begs for

mercy and grace; a dry form of words will not satisfy it then, but it begs with tears, Lord help me, or I perish! Save me, or I am undone for ever! Here the soul humbly approaches the throne of grace by prayer, and if an answer is not quickly received, (for such a soul is apt to think the time long,) it waits patiently. For I know, saith the truly poor soul, there is no help for me but from thee, O my God, and my Saviour! the food which must keep life in me, is thy word, and the raiment which I want, is thy righteousness. The Lord looks with a compassionate eye on such souls, and doth not use to turn them away empty; but as they abide in the patience, waiting for his appearance in hope, he assures them of the kingdom; and a great turn and change is witnessed; for the blessing of Christ makes them rich, adds no sorrow with it; for the greatest sorrow was, and is, for want of it. Now their treasure and heart is in heaven, and heavenly things are their chiefest delight; now they are clothed with Christ's righteousness, he hath put it upon them, and they shew it in the sight of men, a thorough change being wrought both within and without also; the Holy Spirit bearing witness with their spirits, that they are the children of God; and Christ says, "Theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Verse 4. "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted."

The mourning here spoken of, is that of a godly sort; which may sometimes appear outwardly. First, the soul may mourn for its own sins and iniquities: 2dly. For want of a Saviour: and 3rdly. For the iniquities of others. For, first, "All have sinned, and come short

of the glory of God;"* and since we have all sinned, we have all need to mourn before the Lord, and bow ourselves before the Most High: and when he sees that we are humbled before him, he then will comfort us: Christ will send the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, in his name, who will come unto us; and when he is come, we may plainly know and understand it is he, by what he doeth, according to Christ's own rule, which is infallible and certain. When he is come, he will reprove, or convince, the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.† Thus, that which shews us our sin, and convinces us of it, is the Spirit of truth, the Comforter: after we have mourned for our sins which he convinces us of, then he comforts us with inward comfort and consolation.

Secondly, The soul being truly in love with Christ, and he being absent from the soul in some sense, (or if he seems to stay a great while from it, although to try and prove the soul,) this makes us mourn greatly; and well may a soul be sorrowful, when Christ spiritually withdraws himself:—the children of the bride-chamber mourn in the bridegroom's absence, but rejoice in his presence, says Christ; who is the very perfection of beauty and holiness. But the soul abiding in his love, and seeking him, and waiting for him, in his own due time he will certainly come to that soul; for he is the Truth who said, "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted."

Thirdly, Again, pious souls cannot but mourn for the sins and abominations of the times, which are a great exercise to them, and affect

* Rom. iii. 23. † John xvi. 8.

them with sorrow and mourning; but they are comforted with blessed promises, which the Holy Ghost at times and seasons immediately applies to their souls, as recorded in the Holy Scriptures; and let it be remembered, that all our good times and seasons are in the hand of the Lord. It is recorded in the Holy Scripture that God would have his people spoken comfortably to; and that he would give them "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified."*

Verse 5. "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth."

"Be not high-minded," saith one of his servants; and another saith, "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble;"† again, "The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way;"‡ So that well said our holy Saviour, that the meek should be blessed: grace is given to them, and God is their teacher, and their guide in judgment; a most blessed gift, teacher and guide: a great blessing indeed, to receive grace from Almighty God, to be taught his ways by him, and to have the holy One to be our guide in judgment. And he who has all power in heaven and in earth committed into his hand, says as above, that "the meek shall inherit the earth:" they have the truest enjoyment of all the things of this life: whereas the proud and scornful are a burthen to themselves and others, and

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* Isaiah lxi. 3. † James iv. 6. ‡ Psal. xxv. 9.

hardly any thing pleases them, or any thing is good enough for them; when on the other hand, the meek and contented mind hath a continual feast.

Verse 6. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."

Let it be remembered, that as our mortal bodies cannot enjoy health long, without a natural appetite to meat and drink, so our souls cannot live unto holiness, without a spiritual hunger, and an inward thirst after the righteousness which Christ puts upon his saints; such souls he will fill, as holy Mary witnessed and bare her testimony to the truth thereof, namely, "He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away."* If we hunger and thirst after righteousness, truly, then shall we pray to our heavenly Father for divine food, and it will be our meat and drink to do his will; and we shall delight to feed upon his word, as Christ says, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."†

Verse 7. "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy."

It is highly necessary for mortals to shew mercy, in all their words and actions one to another, and also to the creatures, which God hath made for the use of man: it is usually said, that a merciful man is merciful to his beast; and if men are merciful to their beasts, how much more ought they to be merciful one to another!

When mercy is to be extended, it ought not

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* Luke i. 53. † Matt. iv. 4.

to be done sparingly, since thereby, according to Christ's blessed doctrine, we are to obtain mercy. That servant that shewed no mercy to his fellow, had no mercy shewn unto him from his Lord. It is also recorded in the name of the Lord, He hath shewn unto thee O man, what is good, that thou shouldest do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God;* by which it appears, that we are not just in the sight of God, if we are cruel and unmerciful one to another: and we ought not only to be merciful, but to love it; which, if we are truly humble, we shall certainly do. Mercy will lessen and not magnify weakness, failings, or small trivial things one in another, and sometimes as the case may require, some larger things; and yet there is room for seasonable reproof and correction, but mercy must be mixed with justice, else the correction may end in tyranny.

Verse 8. "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."

By which we may understand, that we are to take care of our hearts, and to keep a strict watch over them; and not admit unclean or unchaste thoughts, or sinful desires, to have an entrance therein. And if at unawares, they should at any time enter, we must not entertain nor love them, but turn them out; for we should be of purer eyes than to behold iniquity with any allowance or approbation: otherwise it will hinder us from seeing God, and from the sweet enjoyment of his most precious presence, and beholding the only Begotten of the Father, and the fulness of his grace and truth, which we cannot see if our hearts

* Mic. vi. 8.

are impure. An instance of which we have in the *Scribes*, and *Pharisees*, who, though they were outwardly righteous and clean, yet within were very impure, so that they could not see God though he was in Christ reconciling the world to himself: notwithstanding their nice discerning eyes, yet they could not see him, for the impurity of their hearts, which was so great, that they murdered the Just One, their hearts being full of deceit and hypocrisy. Make clean the inside, that the outside may be clean also,* says Christ: from whence it appears, that a true Christian must be clean, both within and without. The true beginning of the work of purity and sanctity must be first within; and being innocent and pure in heart, we shall then see the glory of the Father, the lovely beauty of the Son, and the power of the Holy Ghost or Spirit.

Verse 9. "Blessed are the peace-makers: for they shall be called the children of God."

This peace-making is excellent work, and a blessed calling! What pity it is, that there are not more such workmen in the world, who would set themselves heartily to it, which if they did in a right spirit, God would certainly prosper the work in their hands, and plentifully reward them with his own peace, which passeth the understanding of the natural man. If our ingenious men, our men and women of skill and good natural parts, would take a little pains, nay, when the case requires, a great deal, the Almighty would richly reward them. This work is not too mean even for princes

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* Matt. xxiii. 26.

and nobles; no, not even the greatest monarchs on earth, unless it be too mean for them to be called the Children of God. And if the children of God are peace-makers, what, and whose children are they who break the peace of nations, communities, and families? Wherefore, we should seek peace with all men and ensue it, by our continual seeking of it, being a precious jewel when found; and though this office may seem a little unthankful in the beginning, or at first, yet in the end, it brings forth the peaceable fruits of righteousness, as many so labouring have witnessed. And Christ, to encourage the work, says, "They shall be called the children of God;" which are words of the King of Kings; and if the princes of this world would promote this work among themselves, it would save them a vast expense of treasure, and of blood; and as these peace-makers are to be called the children of God, they who are truly concerned herein, are not only so called, but are so indeed and in truth.

Verse 10. "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for their's is the kingdom of heaven."

Persecution may be considered in relation to calumny and reproach, and to imprisonments, confinements or the like, or taking away life or goods on a religious account for conscientious scruples. What sad work hath there been on this account in the world, among professors of Christ and Christianity, which is indeed a great reproach to that holy name. But however, the persecuted have this comfort in the midst of all their sufferings, they are blessed of Christ their Lord, who himself suffered for them, and are promised by him the kingdom of heaven.

By which doctrine it may safely be concluded that the members of his true church never persecuted any, though they have been often persecuted by many.

It were to be desired, that the moderation of all Christians might more and more increase, and might appear unto all men, because God is at hand, who will justify the innocent, whom he knows better than any man, because he sees their hearts, and he will condemn none but the guilty. How shall the *Jews* be converted, or the *Turks* convinced of the Christian religion, while its professors are tearing and rending one another to pieces? Had it not been for the immoderation and persecution among professors of Christ and Christendom, so called, it is probable Christianity would have made a far greater progress in the world long before this time, than it hath now done. Persecution hath been proposed by the immoderate, to allay heats and divisions, and cure breaches; but the ancient history of persecution, and the modern practice of it, fully convince us that it hath always tended to make the divisions greater, and the breach wider, and so the contention to grow endless; which nothing will end, but a calm and quiet temper of mind, the mind being cooled by the gentle influence of the holy Spirit of Christ, the immaculate Lamb, who came not to destroy nor devour, but to seek and to save that which was lost and gone astray, that he might bring them home to his fold of rest in his Father's Kingdom.

Verse 11. "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake.

Verse 12. "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."

There is a persecution, as before hinted, by calumny, and reproach or reviling, by evil speaking and falsities, which, for the most part, it is better patiently and quietly to suffer, for Christ's sake; and if we are abused, to appeal to him: for many times words beget words, till at last it comes to prejudice, and breaks the unity and peace of brethren and families; so that in a general way, one had better suffer the calumnies and reproaches of evil men, with a tender concern for God's glory, resting in the blessing of Christ; and that thou wilt most surely feel, if thou canst appeal to him on this wise, "Lord, thou knowest I suffer this wrong for thy sake." In such sufferings, there is an inward joy, a spiritual rejoicing; and the heart of the persecuted is abundantly more glad, through the blessing and goodness of Christ, than the persecutor's, whose conscience accuseth him in secret. And as to personal persecution, it is no more than the prophets, and our Lord, did suffer before us. And with that consideration, Christ comforts "those who suffer with him:" these have the promise of reigning with him; and himself hath promised them a reward, no less than the kingdom of heaven.

Verse 13. "Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt hath lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men."

Here Christ sheweth that his followers must season the earth, by living a savoury life, and

by walking according to his doctrine, which is wonderfully set forth in this excellent sermon; and if we live up to those holy rules, we shall then be serviceable in our generation, and our lives will teach the people as well as our words, and sometimes better too, by how much example is better than precept; and indeed Christians ought to be careful in both, in life to live holily, and in words to be sparing, observing to let their words be few and savoury, seasoned with grace, that they may minister grace to the hearers.

Verse 14. "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid."

True and faithful Christians are indeed as stars in God's firmament. The stars are of excellent use to people in the night season, and in a particular manner to those who travel on the seas, for when they have not seen the sun for a season, then they are good guides to the seafaring man; and likewise in the wilderness on the land: and this world is like a wilderness, and like the troubled sea, to some poor souls; and then good men and good women are serviceable to reprove and instruct in righteousness. "Such," says Daniel the prophet, "shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars for ever and ever." And these are like "a city set upon an hill, which cannot be hid."

Verse 15. "Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house."

Mortal men, when divinely enlightened by the grace and Spirit of Christ, ought to exert themselves to their master's glory, and excite others, and stir them up to their duty; and to endeavour as much as in them lies, to promote the king-

dom and interest of their dear Lord. "The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord;"* and this candle is often lighted by Christ, who "lighteth every man that cometh into the world."† The great and good end of Christ's lighting man's spirit, and illuminating him with divine light, is, that he might shine out to others, in a good conversation and a holy life, which is serviceable to others and himself also; and answers the end of him who enlightened him as by the fire of his word, or with a coal from his holy altar. And those who have received greater gifts, or degrees of divine light from Christ, than some others, and may have a larger share of natural or acquired parts, ought not to hide it under a bushel, but put it in its proper place, or on a candlestick; and as the candle is of little use when it is put out, therefore we ought to be very careful to keep to watchfulness and prayer, that it be kept lighted in time of darkness; for the candle of the wicked is often put out.

Verse 16. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

Since there is a bright and shining nature and quality in the holy lives of Christ's servants, and in the conversation of his faithful followers, therefore it should and ought to be manifest, and to appear before men; our lamp should be burning, and our light shining; and we should take care to get and keep holy oil in our vessels, that therewith our lamps may be supplied, otherwise folly instead of wisdom will appear in our con-

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* Prov. xx. 27. † John i. 9.

versation: which will be a hindrance, when our great Bridegroom cometh, to our entrance into life or God's kingdom; and greatly hindereth our Master's glory, which by all means we are to endeavour the furtherance of. And men generally take more notice of our evil works, and, where an evil eye is open, will sooner see them, than our good ones; so that we had need to be very careful, and keep a holy watch in our conversation, that our light may so shine, as that our Father which is in heaven may be glorified, in our bringing forth much good fruit.

Verse 17. "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

Verse 18. "For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled."

The excellency of the dispensation of the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ is really wonderful! having no manner of tendency towards destroying the law of God given by Moses: for Christ's doctrine comes up through it, fufils it, and goes beyond it, in perfection, and in the beauty of holiness, and in the life and power of pure religion.

Verse 19. "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Verse 20. "For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Those Scribes and Pharisees had a righteous-

ness, but it was one of their own making, an outside one only, whereas within they were full of deceit and hypocrisy; they cried up righteousness in words, and yet cried out against him who taught it in the greatest purity, and sought his destruction; they were notable examples to all persecutors for religion. Our Lord and his servants did not, nor do, speak against outside holiness, so as the inside be the same; for a living man hath both inside and out; so has living righteousness an inward and outward purity, which is manifest by its fruits; and those fruits are fruits of the Spirit, which are meekness, temperance, patience, hope, and charity, or brotherly love.

Verse 21. "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill: and whosoever shall kill, shall be in danger of the judgment:

Verse 22. "But I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council; but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell-fire."

Here we may learn that the law provided nothing against anger, only in this case against shedding of blood; and many times if anger is too much kindled, it sets the soul on fire. People, as it grows hotter, call one another out of their names, and take the name of the Lord in vain, break the third commandment, swearing by him, and cursing men: we may plainly see by Christ's doctrine, that the first degree of anger, without cause, is dangerous; but the second is very dangerous. Soft words from a sedate mind will wonderfully help in

this case. It is not easily conceived, what a mighty advantage Satan hath upon one that is angry without a cause: and we are often apt to think we have cause, when we have none at all; and then we make work for repentance, without which we are in danger of hell-fire. Wherefore every true Christian ought to watch against the evil of anger.

Verse 23. "Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee;

Verse 24. "Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."

The Christian religion admits of no malice nor guile; the worship of it is in spirit and truth, and love without hypocrisy, without deceit or hatred: if we come to the altar, these will hinder our acceptance. Though we may indeed have a gift, we are to seek reconciliation, and not say, Let him come to me, I will not go to him, but Christ tells us we must go to him; and if thou go to the offended, in a meek and Christian spirit, and seek reconciliation, if thy Brother will not be reconciled, if the fault be in him, thou hast done thy duty, and thy gift will be received, and Christ will manifest himself to thee by his Grace and Spirit. But yet art thou to seek for peace, he having ordained it, and laid it as a duty incumbent on thee.

Verse 25. "Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him: lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.

Verse 26. "Verily I say unto thee, thou shalt

by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing."

It is of dangerous consequence to let disagreements lie long, it eats like a canker, and it destroys the very nature of religion. Personal differences are a great hurt to families, to churches, to nations, and countries, especially when espoused by parties; then what rending, tearing, and devouring work they make: wherefore take Christ's counsel, and agree quickly; and if the difference be on the account of debt, as is often likely, if the debt be just, it is better to offer up one's self, and all that one has in the world, than to stand out with one's adversary, till it come to the utmost extremity.

Verse 27. "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery:

Verse 28. "But I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."

The law was against adultery, but the gospel is against lust; and where there is no lust, there can be no adultery; for then the occasion of adultery is taken away; and the cause being taken away, the effect of course ceaseth. Behold the chaste and pure doctrine of Christ, and his holy dispensation, greatly excelling the law or *Mosaic* dispensation! Our blessed Saviour doth not admit of an unchaste or lustful looking upon women; much less of immodest salutations, touches, embraces, or discourses, which all tend to beget lust in the hearts of men; and lust conceived, brings forth sin, and sin when finished brings forth death to the soul.

Verse 29. "And if thy right eye offend thee,

pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

Verse 30. "And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell."

Christ compares the sinful lusts and inclinations, which are the cause of men's destruction, and their being cast into hell, to a right eye or a right hand, two of the most useful and serviceable members of the body; not that he intended that we should cut off our natural members, but that we should cut off these sinful lusts, and cast them from us, though they were as a right eye or hand. Now observe, it is very much against nature, and very painful, to pull out an eye, or to cut off a hand: so sin, of many kinds, is very agreeable to nature, or the natural man, and it is very hard for him to part with it; he pleads the use of it, and when Christ, the Physician of the soul, comes to put his incision knife to it, which is his word, poor man is too apt to fly from it, and to shrink from under its holy stroke: the holy Baptist John, understanding our Lord's doctrine, and being sensible of the powerful working of Christ's word and Spirit, says, "Now also the axe is laid to the root of the trees, therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the fire."*

Verse 31. "It hath been said, whosoever shall

* Matt. iii. 10.

put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement.

Verse 32. "But I say unto you, that whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery; and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced, committeth adultery."

Men and their wives are often too apt to magnify one another's faults, and put the worst construction upon each other's words and actions, when they differ, which widens breaches instead of healing them: whereas love and true charity, and putting the best and not the worst construction on things, would chase away wrath, strife, and hatred; and though *Moses* gave the *Jews* that permission of divorcement for the hardness of their hearts, yet *Christians* ought to live so, that there should be no need of it among them.

Verse 33. "Again ye have heard, that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths:

Verse 34. "But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven, for it is God's throne:

Verse 35. "Nor by the earth, for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King.

Verse 36. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black.

Verse 37. "But let your communication be yea, yea; nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil."

It was allowed to the Jews to vow to the Lord, and swear by his name, provided they perfomed their vows and oaths. But here our Lord pro-

hibits and disallows, or abolishes, all swearing; "I say unto you, swear not at all." That he here prohibits only vain swearing, or common swearing, cannot be, because the oaths he here speaks of were solemn, and to the Lord. And the Apostle James tells us, we must not swear by any oath.* Neither did the primitive Christians swear at all; and Christians ought to be so just in their conversations, as that their solemn words or promises would give them credit, without any need of oaths. If occasion or need be thou hast liberty to add yea to thy yea, and nay to thy nay, or solemn words equivalent to it; and if more be evil, it must also be evil to require more.

Verse 38. "Ye have heard that it hath been said, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth:

Verse 39. "But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.

Verse 40. "And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.

Verse 41. "And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain."

There was room and liberty by the law of Moses, for a man to revenge himself, if he had an injury done to him; but Christ teaches patient suffering; we are not to give offences, but we are to take them quietly for his sake, in which Jesus was an excellent example to us, whose suffering was not for himself, but for us; he turned his cheek to the smiter, and his face to those that plucked off the hair: to a man of courage and choler, this indeed is no small cross;

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* James v. 12.

but he must deny himself, and take up Christ's cross daily, and follow him, if he will be his disciple.

Verse 42. "Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou away."

We are here to suppose the asker to be in real want and necessity, and the borrower also to stand in need; and the asked to be in a capacity, and of ability, to supply and assist the asker and borrower; and then in such case we are by no means to refuse to give to him that asketh, nor to turn away from him that would borrow of us; and if we are not in a capacity to supply, then to use mild and friendly expressions; for Christians should be courteous and kind to all, and particularly to the distressed. And if we think that the askers or borrowers are not worthy, or deserving for their own sakes, we should, if need be, give and lend for Christ's sake, and in obedience to him, though it cross our own inclinations.

Verse 43. "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.

Verse 44. "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

Verse 45. "That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil, and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."

If we love our enemies, we can in no wise destroy them, although it were in our power. Again, "Bless them that curse you." But alas! how apt are men (and even those who would

think it hard to be told they are disobedient to Christ) to render railing for railing and cursing for cursing, instead of blessing. "Do good to them that hate you." If we are sensible of any one that hates us, and have real demonstration of it, (for sometimes we imagine it, when it is not so,) yet are we to do them all the good turns we can. "And pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." Thus we are not to render evil for evil, but to overcome the evil with that which is good. Sweet was our Lord's example to us in this, when he said, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do."* If persecutors did really know what they do, when they persecute the just, their condemnation must needs be very great; but if we do good for evil, as Christ hath taught, then are we the children of our heavenly Father, "who maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."

Verse 46. "For if ye love them, which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same?

Verse 47. "And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? Do not even the publicans so?"

Our virtue is much more shining in loving those who do not love us, than in loving those that do; it is natural for us to love them that love us, and we should be ungrateful if we did not: but the reward is greater, if we love them that do not love us; which must be manifested in deeds as well as words: for saying and

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* Luke xxiii. 34.

doing, sometimes are two things; which made the Apostle say, that our love must not be with word and with tongue only, but in deed and in truth.*

Verse 48. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

Christ would have us to be perfect in the practice of his doctrine, and to live up to it in perfect obedience, according to the best of our judgments and understandings; and not to do his work by halves, but honestly and perfectly, according to the measure of grace received; some having received twice, some thrice as much as some others, as the parable of the talents plainly sheweth: so that what discoveries or manifestations of grace, light, or truth, we have received, we ought to walk up to them perfectly, "Even as your Father, which is in heaven is perfect." As the Almighty is perfect in his love, justice, mercy, grace, and truth, unto poor mortals, in Christ Jesus, his only begotten, and in all his works; so ought we to be perfect in our known duty: as it is written, "Ye shall be holy, for I, the Lord your God, am holy."†

According to our measure, gift, and degree of grace received, we are to be holy and perfect, as God, our heavenly Father, and Christ our dear Lord, is so in fulness.

Chap. vi. verse 1. "Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.

Verse 2. "Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the

* 1 John iii. 18. † Lev. xix. 2.

hypocrites do, in the synagogues, and in the streets, that they may have glory of men: verily, I say unto you, they have their reward.

Verse 3. "But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth:

Verse 4. "That thine alms may be in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret, himself shall reward thee openly."

The Christian religion in its purity, according to the doctrine of the Founder of it, is a compassionate religion, and full of pity as well as piety; it is a holy composition of charity and goodness. The Apostle thus describes it: the pure religion, and that which is undefiled before God and the Father, is this, "to visit the fatherless, and widows in their affliction; and to keep himself unspotted from the world."* This is pure religion, and this is the Christian religion; happy are those that walk up to it, and live according to the precepts of him who dictated it: then the widows and the fatherless would not be neglected, the poor would be very generously taken care of, and our garments [or conduct] kept clean; and all done as secretly as may be; for when we proclaim our alms-deeds, and charity, we lose our reward from our heavenly Father. Also when alms is given, it ought to be done in the spirit of love, and meekness, and so received; else the receiver loses a second benefit, and the giver his heavenly reward. To give to the poor is to lend to Him that made us, and we shall have good and greater measure returned us again.

Verse 5. "And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to

* Jam. i. 27.

pray standing in the synagogues, and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward.

Verse 6. "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

Verse 7. "But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.

Verse 8. "Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him."

Prayer is absolutely needful for the being and well-being of an inward reformed Christian. And private prayer, according to Christ's rule, is effectual and rewardable. He also speaks against hypocrisy, and loving to be seen of men, with a command not to be like unto them. "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet." When we feel, and are sensible of a divine call, this must of course be the right and best time, (for Christ has not set us a distinct hour,) then we are to enter into the closet of an humble heart or mind, or some secret place in private. This is Christ's order for particular persons in a general way; but is not intended to prevent such as are rightly concerned, to pray in the public assemblies, or gathering of the church; for we have Christ for our example, who prayed openly and publicly with his disciples.

"But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking." Formal repe-

titions of prayer, repeated day by day, when they are not according to the states of those to whom they are read or repeated, must needs be vain, and people may vainly make use of the Lord's own form in that case, (though it is the best in the world,) and to think to be heard for their much speaking, is to run into an error of the heathen. "Be not ye," says Christ, "therefore like unto them, for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him." Prayer is a gift from God, and from Christ, and as we wait on God in Christ's name and power, he will give us that gift, when he sees we stand in need of it; for he has promised to pour out the spirit of prayer and of supplication upon his people. And a great Apostle said, He would pray with the spirit, and with the understanding also.* In another place he says, "We know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered."†

Verse 9. "After this manner, therefore, pray ye: Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Verse 10. "Thy kingdom come: Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.

Verse 11. "Give us this day our daily bread.

Verse 12. "And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

Verse 13. "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: for thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory, for ever. Amen.

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* 1 Cor. xiv. 15. † Romans viii. 26.

Verse 14. "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

Verse 15. "But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

A short form, and but few words, but of excellent composition. And truly happy are those who live so in their conversation, that they may, when they use them, do it without falsehood, or deceit; enjoying the answer of peace in the practice of them, and the sense of grace influencing the soul.

1st. "Our Father which art in heaven." The great Creator is indeed our universal Father, hath made us all, and all nations, of one blood; but there is another, a nearer relation than this, to be a child of God by regeneration, for otherwise, if we live in an unregenerate state, in our natural sins and lusts, all which are of Satan, then Christ says, "Ye are of your father, the devil; and the lusts of your father ye will do;"* a strong reason; but in another place, "Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother."† It is into this relation that the soul ought to come, that can truly and religiously say, "Our Father, &c." 2ndly. "Hallowed be thy name." Do we sanctify the holy name of the God of the whole earth? Do we religiously observe to fear and serve him? Or do we profane his awful name, by taking it in vain, and living in sin and vanity? Which instead of hallowing and

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* John viii. 44. † Matt. xii. 50.

sanctifying his name, is to dishonour and reproach it on our part; though he will hallow and honour his own name in justice and judgment, on profane and ungodly livers, at the last day, when he shall come to judge the quick and the dead by Jesus Christ. God will not be mocked; such as every one sows, such shall he reap, whether sin unto death, or righteousness unto life.

3rdly. "Thy kingdom come." His kingdom is a kingdom of righteousness. Happy souls! who seek the righteousness of it betimes, and continue in it to the end. If this kingdom come, Satan's, which is a kingdom of sin and unrighteousness, must needs fall.

Oh! that the rising generation might be strong to overcome the wicked one, and to be instruments to pull down his kingdom, and promote the kingdom of God, and his Christ; and if we do not believe that Satan's power and kingdom may and ought to be destroyed in us, how can we pray without hypocrisy for the coming of God's holy kingdom? Believing we must live and die in sin, is a great support to Satan's kingdom, and a great hinderance to the coming of the kingdom of the dear Son of God.

4thly. "Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." Most certainly the will of God is punctually and perfectly done in heaven; but this is the misery of many souls, to believe it not possible to do God's will here on earth, as it is done in heaven. So that such pray in unbelief or without a true faith. Is it not also a kind of charging Christ with commanding that which cannot be done? It is worthy our sedate consideration.

5thly. "Give us this day our daily bread."

We not being capable, without his blessing, of procuring our bodies' or souls' bread, either natural or supernatural, and because our souls cannot live without the last, any more than our bodies without the first, therefore we ought to pray to our heavenly and most holy Father for both, without doubting; and this should be done daily, either in words, holy sighing, or spiritual groans; the Almighty knowing the language of the soul in one, as well as the other.

6thly. "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." Or, "trespasses," as we forgive them that trespass against us; which is to the same end and purpose. If a debtor is indebted to us, and happens through some accident or other to be insolvent, and have not wherewith to pay, we are to forgive him, else how can we expect God to forgive us? For we are all his debtors, and have nothing, that we can call our own in a religious sense, to pay that great debt, which we owe to him, our mighty creditor. But oh! his infinite mercy and love is very great to us, poor mortals; and he would have us to imitate him, and forgive one another, as we expect he should forgive us. And since offences and trespasses will come, we must forgive, and the more freely, when the person offending sues by humble petition to the offended for it; then if we forgive not, neither will our heavenly Father forgive us our trespasses.

7thly. "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Verse 16. "Moreover, when ye fast, be not as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance; for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto

men to fast: verily, I say unto you, they have their reward.

Verse 17. "But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face;

Verse 18. "That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly."

Christ would have all our works of piety, virtue, and charity, all our religious duties, done in the divine love and filial fear of God, and not for vain glory, or ostentation; and truly, unless we expect our reward from men, there is no need of an outward hypocritical shew, in such extraordinary duties, as is that of fasting, when truly called to it, and truly performed: which the Jews were much in the practice of; and being but formal hypocrites, many of them, in it, our Lord reprehends them, and wants his own hearers to shun the like deceit.

Verse 19. "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:

Verse 20. "But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.

Verse 21. "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

Earthly treasures are very apt to take up the mind, and to draw it from heaven, and because Christ would have his children to be in heaven with him, in tender love he adviseth them not to lay up for themselves riches or treasure on earth. If it be said we lay it up for our children, it may be said also, it is the same snare to them,

as to the parents, and sometimes a greater; and when it is gotten it is liable to many casualties; and creates a great deal of care and trouble; wherefore Christ tenderly adviseth to seek after, and lay up another treasure, of another nature, in another, and a safer and better place, which will not be liable to the like casualties of the former treasure and place, and urgeth us to it, with this great reason, "For where your treasure is there will your heart be also." Oh, may every true Christian's treasure and heart be there for ever!

Verse 22. "The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.

Verse 23. "But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!"

It is not good to look on men or things, with an evil eye; but to look on one's self and others, in the fear of God, having a single eye to his glory: and then being enlightened by his divine light, we shall discern between good and evil; whereas if there be any double dealing or looking or thinking; or, if ungodly self be in the bottom, and not the glory of God; then our light is turned into darkuess, and that darkness will be very great, as it is said in the holy Scriptures, "A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways."*

Verse 24. "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other;

* James i. 8.

or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other: ye cannot serve God and mammon."

We cannot give our hearts to God, and to this world and the things of it also, so as to set our affections on both, as saith the apostle, "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."* And again, "The love of money, is the root of all evil;"† i. e. the inordinate love of it, and seeking after it, and serving of, and for it, more than for our Maker and Saviour. Then let us despise the world, and the things of it, in comparison of our God, and our Saviour. We do not understand by those words of Christ, that he intended to debar us from seeking a comfortable accommodation for ourselves and families in this world; but that we should not set our hearts and affections upon it: for we cannot equally affect both heaven and earth.

Verse 25. "Therefore I say unto you, take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?

Verse 26. "Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns: yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?

Verse 27. "Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?"

Christ [as the text implies] would have us without anxious thoughts about our living in this world, i. e. about our eating, drinking, and clothing, and tells us, that the "life is more than meat, and the body than raiment;" by which he shews

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* 1 John ii. 15. † 1 Tim. vi. 10.

us, that he which gave the life, will, by his providence, support it; and as he hath formed the body, he will form that which must feed it; and that we might the more depend upon God's providence, he brings us to learn, or teaches us, by the fowls of the air, which neither sow nor reap, nor gather into barns, and yet their great Creator feedeth them; and asks, if we are not much better than they. So that we being more noble creatures, need not doubt of the care and providence of God, and his blessing on the labour of our hands; though our hearts are not concerned unnecessarily about it, but we have freely given them to God, and to his Christ, our Saviour.

The farmers or planters cannot, by their thoughtfulness, cause their corn, fruits, or cattle to multiply or grow; nor the tradesman his custom, goods, or business, without a proper application, which our Saviour is not against, only he would have us without an encumbered and over-caring mind. The merchant likewise by all his thoughtfulness, cannot bring home his ship from far, nor carry her safe to her desired port. All things on this wise are in the hand of Almighty God, and it is our duty to trust in him, and to depend on his divine providence, for meat, drink, and clothing; for happiness here, and hereafter for ever.

Verse 28. "And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:

Verse 29. "And yet I say unto you, that even *Solomon* in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these.

Verse 30. "Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow

is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?

Verse 31. "Therefore take no thought, saying, what shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewithal shall we be clothed?

Verse 32. "(For after all these things do the *Gentiles* seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things."

Many people now, as well as then, are very fond of their clothing and love to be gay and fashionable therein; and some are not a little proud of their clothes, and are not a little thoughtful how they may deck themselves to be admired: when our Lord, who wore a vesture without a seam, sends us to the lilies to consider their beauty and glory, declaring, that Solomon, in all his grandeur and splendour, was not arrayed like one of those. Well, if God so clothe the grass of the earth, will he not clothe us? if we believe not, we must have but very little faith. So that it would be much better for us to consult how we shall do to please God, and honour him, and his holy Son, and divine name, than to consult what we shall eat or drink, or how or wherewith we shall be clothed, which things the Gentiles sought after, more than after God. But we knowing that our heavenly Father seeth that we have need of all these things, should leave it to him, and first seek his kingdom and righteousness.

Verse 33. "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.

Verse 34. "Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself; sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

Here is a glorious gospel promise: upon seeking the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, all these things shall be added to us, viz. meat, drink, and raiment, the necessary things that we want, to support us in these lower regions, or while we are here in this world; but then, withal, let us remember it must be our first work, it must be the chief desire of our souls; it must be first in several senses: first, as to our young and tender years; first, in the morning of every day; first, in respect of, and before all other things. First, as it hath pleased God to give us a being in this world, and being in the prime and flower of our years, we should then devote our souls to God, and his work and service, and enter into covenant with him, with full purpose of heart, and design of soul, to keep the same truly and inviolably; for it would be better not to make covenant, then to make it, and break it: neither should we slight or put off the work of God till we are old, and in our declining years; as though we gave him the refuse, and broken end of our days, and conclude, It will better become me when I am old to serve him. Oh, no! learn the fear of God truly, and practice it when thou art young; and thou wilt not easily depart from it when thou art old: as thou wilt find it hard to get into a holy life and conversation, when thou hast been spending thy youth in folly and vanity. Remember thy Creator therefore in the days of thy youth, before the evil day come.

2ndly. If we consider that our life and being is daily granted to us, and we supported by the goodness and providence of Almighty God every day, it is but just that he should have the first or prime of our thoughts in the morning of the day:

and he being the first and the last, ought to be last as well as first in our thoughts.

3rdly. For what are the things of this world in comparison of those that are to come! all these are fading and transitory: but the things of that which is to come, are durable and permanent; and therefore ought to be first and chief in our minds.

Chap. vii. verse 1. "Judge not, that ye be not judged;

Verse 2. "For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again."

A great and wise expression, or sentence from a righteous and just judge, the Judge of heaven, and of earth, to whom all power in both is given; by which we may easily perceive, we are to be very careful in our judgment and censures of others, that we are not rash and censorious therein; considering that with what judgment we judge our neighbours, or fellow-mortals, with such shall we also be judged ourselves, and that measure which we measure out to others, shall be filled to us again. When it comes to our turn to be judged or censured by others, for any thing which we have done or said, we are ready then to cry out for charity: are we so careful to be charitable in our judging and censuring others?

It is better to suspend personal judgment, unless we could see the hearts of men; and if we think we do, then to imitate God and Christ, who mixes mercy and love with judgment: rashness and extremes in judgment, being commonly hurtful.

Verse 3. "And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?

Verse 4. "Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye?

Verse 5. "Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye."

Most true it is, that the transgressions of others are most afflicting to those who fear God, and this is not intended to hinder the good from reproving the evil; but shews, that we must be clear of evil in ourselves when we reprove others, else the guilt of hypocrisy will be, and is by Christ cast upon us. We are more to look at our own failings, than at the failings of others and to take special care, that we are clear of that which we reprove others for; and is it not deceit, to set up for reformers of others, when there are great defects in ourselves? It is too general a fault in poor mortals to be quicker sighted to see the faults of others, than their own. It is worthy reciting our Saviour's words to the Jews, who brought the woman taken in adultery to him, and told him, By their law she ought to die; he answers, He that is without sin, let him first cast a stone at her.* So they being guilty, and convicted of sin in their own consciences, left her to Christ, and went their way. And when we have done what we can to convince others of sin, we must leave them to Christ at last.

Verse 6. "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you."

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* John viii. 7.

When we see the persecuting nature and selfish spirit in men, it is to little purpose generally, to cast before them the precious pearl of truth, or to shew unto them the mysteries of the kingdom of God, or the light of life; but when people are sober, and shew forth humanity and moderation, then are holy things valuable to them, and the things of Christ's kingdom, and his doctrine, precious in their eyes, or esteem; where fore it greatly behoveth Christ's ministers to minister that to the people, which is suitable for them, and rightly to divide between the precious and the vile, and to give to every one his portion according to his deeds; mercy to whom mercy, and judgment to whom judgment belongs.

Verse 7. "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:

Verse 8. "For every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.

Verse 9. "Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?

Verse 10. "Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?

Verse 11. "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven, give good things to them that ask him?"

Our kind and tender Redeemer would stir up and provoke souls to prayer and supplication; he has been liberal in his holy advice; and to stir us up to it, here are moving expressions, if thy heart be open to receive them. Can we have easier terms if we were to make them ourselves

with the Lord, than to ask, and have; seek, and find; knock, and the gates are opened; provided we ask in faith tenderly, and seek in humility, and knock with divine wisdom and submission? Our Lord's own practice shews that we should be tender, submissive, and fervent in prayer; and then the fervent prayer of the righteous availeth much with the Lord. Christ urgeth us to it, and brings ourselves for example: What man is there among you, who, if his son ask bread, or a fish, will he give him a stone, or a serpent? Surely no: no father would deal thus with his child; but when his child is hungry, and wants and asks bread, he gives it to him: so when the Almighty sees our hunger, and we tenderly seek divine assistance and refreshment from him, he, in his own time, satisfies such souls with bread from above, and the thirsty with living water out of the wells of salvation. Oh! blessed be his holy name for evermore!

Verse 12. "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets."

Well may this be called the Golden Rule; for if we square our lives and actions by it, it will certainly mete us out the true way to happiness and glory. We are generally apt to say, when any one doeth ill to another, "Would he be willing to be so served himself?" And if we followed this rule in all our concerns, it would be well; whether in relation to public or private busines; whether in trade or religion, or in our domestic affairs: the law and the prophets point at it, and our Saviour plainly lays it down for a rule for us to walk by.

Verse 13. "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that lead-

eth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

Verse 14. "Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

It is afflicting to consider how natural it is for people to walk in this broad way, and they who walk in it are many; for here is room for people to walk if they are proud, whoremongers, adulterers, thieves, swearers, liars, drunkards, covetous, or in any other evil course of life, this broad way hath room enough in it for them to walk in: but let them know it leadeth to destruction, and the end is eternal misery, and their many companions will administer no consolation to them, when they lift up their eyes in hell. And whereas the way that leads to life, is called strait; it is only strait to flesh and blood, or the will of unregenerate men. Oh! it is a pleasant way, exceeding pleasant, when brethren walk together in love and unity. The enemy of mankind would persuade souls, that it is narrower than it really is, when they have some faint inclination to make trial of it. It may truly be said that blessed are the undefiled, in this strait and narrow way, who walk in the law of the Lord:* for, His ways are ways of pleasantness, and all his paths are peace.†

Verse 15. "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

Verse 16. "Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?

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* Psa. cxix. 1. † Prov. iii. 17.

Verse 17. "Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit: but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

Verse 18. "A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

Verse 19. "Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire.

Verse 20. "Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."

The great Shepherd and Bishop of souls, shews the care which he takes of his sheep, and forewarns them to be careful of false prophets, and deceivers; who though they may clothe themselves with words like the true ones, yet inwardly they would destroy all that do not join with, or receive them, and they are for biting the poor harmless sheep of Christ, and if they could, or it were in their power, would devour them. But our holy, and all-wise Bishop, that we might be preserved from them, tells us how we may infallibly know them; saying, "Ye shall know them by their fruits;" giving us to understand the reasonableness of his doctrine and assertion of knowing them by their fruits. "Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" says Christ. Surely no. That is altogether unnatural, as well as unreasonable and impossible. Well, where must we go for the grapes, and the figs? to be sure we must go to the vine, and the fig-tree: Christ is the body of the vine, and his people are the branches, who bring forth fruit, according to the divine life or sap which they receive, as he taught and teaches his followers. So that if men's words be like the words of angels, if they have

ever so great parts or endowments; yet if their fruits be evil, if they live in sin, and do iniquity, and bring forth the fruits of malice and rage, or devouring persecution, they then are none of Christ's sheep, though they may have their clothing: "For every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit." So if the fruit be evil, the tree is certainly corrupt. And to be made truly good, since we are all corrupt by nature, and in the fall, we must be cut off from that nature, and grafted into Christ, who said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches;" and then our lives and fruits will be changed. And then, "a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit:" and "every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the fire." This is not a destroying the bodies of men that Christ speaks of, but an inward work in the soul, shewing the powerful nature of the dispensation of the gospel of Christ, which is not material cutting, or burning with material fire, or sword: but Christ's word is a fire and sword, to cut down and burn up the evil nature in man.

The apostle confirms this doctrine of his Master thus, He that doeth righteousness is righteous, but he that committeth sin is of the devil.* The Apostle is plain and full, as is Christ, who repeats his doctrine over again, with "Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."

Verse 21. "Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of

* 1 John iii. 7, 8.

heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."

It is not our profession that will give us admittance into heaven, nor a name of religion, nor religious performances, if we love sin and unrighteousness; nor our praying, preaching, hearing, reading, or discoursing of, or arguing for Christ, if we do the works of Satan; for there are many who may yet go further than this, and yet not have admittance into the kingdom of God and our blessed Lord Jesus, as is plainly manifested in the next verses.

Verse 22. "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name have cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works?

Verse 23. "And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you, depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

Wherefore it is bad, and of dangerous consequence, to live in sin and iniquity; or to lean towards it, so as to plead for it, or believe we cannot live without it while in this world. For if we live and die in it, we may justly, according to the above doctrine of Christ, expect that he will say unto us in the great day; "Depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

Verse 24. "Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:

Verse 25. "And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock."

Oh! what abundance of excellent sayings and doctrines, what holy precepts has Christ here re-

commended to the professors of his name, and to them which believe in him, and the Almighty Father and Maker of heaven and earth. Surely we are greatly indebted to our Lord Jesus Christ for those plain divine sayings! But to commend them only is but little, or to read them, or hear them, the keeping and the doing of them is the main thing, the thing that is needful; and to press the practice of them, Jesus has made this apt comparison.

1st. He that hears them, and "doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man:" and indeed it is great wisdom to keep them, (that is, to practice them,) and as great folly to live contrary to them, and plead against them.

2ndly. "Who built his house upon a rock." This rock is Christ, the rock of ages, and his Holy Spirit, or the Holy Ghost, as Christ said to Peter, when Christ was revealed to him: "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father, which is in heaven." "Thou art Peter," (or a stone or rock,) thou art a man, though thy name signifies a rock; and as thy name signifies a rock, so "on this rock will I build my church," (that is, on the spirit of the heavenly Father, which revealed Christ to Peter,) and the Church of Christ so built, the gates of hell cannot prevail against it.

3rdly. "And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock," If floods of persecution, or the windy words of men, come upon this house, it will stand: if sickness and death itself, and many other storms, that we may meet with here, in this low world, should beat against our building, we being built upon the Father, Son, and

Holy Spirit, shall surely stand them all out, and live through all, if we observe to hear, or read Christ's sayings, and to practise the same; then are we on the rock, and shall not fall for that reason.

Verse 26. "And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand.

Verse 27. "And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell; and great was the fall of it."

If we read or hear the doctrine of Christ, and do not dwell in the life of it, nor practice the same, it were better we knew it not. For, as our Saviour said, "That servant which knew his Lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes."*

And doubtless, it is great folly to be sensible of Christ's holy will, and doctrine, and not to do it. If we profess Christianity, and build our profession on Christ, and yet do not observe to keep his sayings, the foundation of our building will be but very loose and sandy; and when those rains, and floods, and winds, which Christ speaks of, shall descend and come, and beat against this building, it must needs fall, and the higher the building is, the greater will be the fall of it.

Verse 28. "And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine:

Verse 29. "For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the *Scribes*."

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* Luke xii. 47.

They were astonished at his doctrine, and well they might: for it excelled even the law, and went beyond it, as when he tells them, it was said of old time, or in the law, "Thou shalt not kill:" he taught that we must not be angry without cause. And whereas the law gives liberty to hate our enemies, he charges us to love them, and pray for them, and do good to them. Again the lay prohibits adultery; Christ prohibits lust, both in the eye, and in the heart. And whereas the law commanded to perform their oaths to the Lord, Christ commands not to swear at all. Now those who are not angry, it is not likely they should kill; those who love their enemies cannot hate or destroy them; those who have not lust in their hearts or eyes, cannot commit adultery; and those who never swear, cannot forswear themselves: all which he with divine power and authority from above, taught; so likewise his ministers and the preachers of his gospel, should wait on him, to be endued with a measure of his divine Spirit, and holy grace, that the hearers might be edified, and the Father, Son, and Spirit, might have the glory, who over all is worthy for ever.

FINIS.

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SENTIMENTS

OF

PIOUS AND EMINENT PERSONS

ON THE

Pernicious Tendency

OF

DRAMATIC ENTERTAINMENTS,

AND OTHER

VAIN AMUSEMENTS;

WITH

A FEW REFLECTIONS ON THE SAME SUBJECT SUBJOINED.

By LINDLEY MURRAY.

A NEW EDITION

Be wise to-day; 'tis madness to defer:
Next day the fatal precedent will plead;
Thus on, till wisdom is push'd out of life. YOUNG.

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Introduction.

IN this age of extreme refinement and pleasurable pursuits, it appears to be almost hopeless, and may, by some, be deemed presumptuous, to attempt to draw the public attention to any strictures, or to the sentiments of any persons whatever, against the favourite and much frequented Entertainments of the Stage.— But, as we live in times of free inquiry, and when candid examinations of all opinions, decently advanced, are recommended, perhaps the following sentiments of several great and good characters, on the dangerous nature and tendency of dramatic Amusements, may be perused with some degree of patience and attention. As, from the weakness of the human mind, its attachment to ancient opinion, and reverence for authority, there is wisdom in freely investigating some long established notions; and the result has often been a dissipation of error, and an establishment of truth; so it is of equal, if not of superior importance, to examine, with impartiality and care, many of our modes of practice, and established indulgences in life.

There is the greater necessity for this scrutiny of conduct, because actions, more than speculation, form the character; and because our passions, depravity, and love of the world, peculiarly dispose us to an attachment to pernicious and pleasurable habits, supported by the authority and practice of numbers around us.

Encouraged by these considerations, the Compiler has ventured to introduce the sentiments and testimonies of a few virtuous characters, against some indulgences which at present meet with general approbation. The subject is far from being here largely discussed; a few only of the most interesting views of it are simply spread before the reader: yet, it is presumed, that, if justly delineated, they are of such importance as to claim the most serious attention. To such an examination they are readily submitted; under a hope, that if conviction of their propriety should be the result, no attachment to former conduct or present pleasure, will preponderate against the dictates of conscience, and that peace of mind, which is, beyond all comparison, a higher enjoyment than the most refined amusements of the world can bestow.

EXTRACTS,

&c.

FROM THE GREAT PASCAL.

"THERE is nothing more capable of letting us into the knowledge of human misery, than an enquiry after the real cause of that perpetual hurry and confusion in which we pass our lives. The soul is sent into the body, to be the sojourner of a few days. She knows this is but a stop, till she may embark for eternity; and that a small space is allowed her to prepare for the voyage. The main part of this space is ravished from her by the necessities of nature, and but a slender pittance left to her own disposal; and yet, this moment that remains, does so strangely oppress and perplex her, that she only studies how to lose it. She feels an intolerable burden in being obliged to live with herself, and think of herself; and, therefore, her principle care is to forget herself, and to let this short and precious moment pass away without reflection, by being amused with things that prevent her notice of its speed. This is the ground of all the tumultuary business, of all the trifling diversions amongst men; in which our general aim is to make the time pass off our hands,

without feeling it, or rather without feeling ourselves; and, by getting rid of this small portion of life, to avoid that inward disgust and bitterness, which we should not fail to meet with, if we found leisure to descend into our own breasts.

Having no infallible remedy against ignorance, misery, and death, we imagine that, at least, some respite, some shelter, may be found, by agreeing to banish them from our meditation. This is the only natural comfort which mankind have been able to invent under their numerous calamities. But a most miserable comfort it proves; because it does not tend to the removal of these evils, but only to the concealment of them for a short season; and because, in thus concealing them, it hinders us from applying such proper means as would remove them. Thus, by a strange revolution in the nature of man, that grief and inward disquiet which he dreads as the greatest of sensible evils, is, in one respect, his greatest good; because it might contribute, more than all things besides, to the putting of him in a successful method of recovery. On the other hand, his diversions, which he seems to prize as his sovereign good, are, indeed, his greatest evil; because they are of all things the most effectual in making him negligent under his distemper; they do but amuse and beguile him; and, in the conclusion, lead him down blindfold into the grave. It is, indeed, one of the miracles of Christianity, that, by reconciling man to God, it restores him to his own good opinion: that it makes him able to bear the sight of himself; and, in some cases, renders solitude and silence more agreeable than all the intercourse and action of mankind. Nor is it by fixing man in his own person, that these wonderful effects are produced; it is by carrying him to

God, and by supporting him under the sense of his miseries, with the hopes of an assured and complete deliverance in a better life."

FROM THE PRINCE OF CONTI.

——"The call which men have for diversion, is not by far so great as is thought, and it consists more in imagination or in custom, than in a real necessity. Those who are employed in bodily labour, have only need of a bare cessation from it. Those who are employed in affairs toilsome to the mind, and but little laborious to the body, have need to recollect themselves from that disposition which this sort of employment naturally causes, and not to dissipate themselves yet more, by diversions which extremely engage the mind. It is a jest to fancy that one has need to pass three hours in filling the mind with follies at a play. Those who find in themselves this need, ought to look on it, not as a natural weakness, but as a vice of custom, which they must cure by serious employment."

——"If the soul abandons itself to false pleasures, it loses the relish of spiritual ones, and finds nothing but disgust for the word of God. When one feeds himself with the vain pleasures of the world, the spiritual senses become stupified, and incapable of relishing, or understanding, the things of God.——Now, among the pleasures of the world, which extinguish the love of the Word of God, it may be said that plays and romances hold the first rank; because there is nothing more opposed to truth; and the

Spirit of God, being a spirit of truth, can have no part with the vanities of the world."

——"Plays and romances not only indispose the soul for all acts of religion and piety, but they give it a disgust, in some measure, to all serious and ordinary actions. As nothing is represented in them but gallantries, or extraordinary adventures, and the discourses are far distant from such as are used in serious affairs, one insensibly takes from them a romantic disposition of mind: the head is filled with heroes and heroines; and women, seeing the adorations which, in them, are given to their sex, have that sort of life so much impressed on their minds, that the affairs of their family and of common life become insupportable to them; and when they return to their houses, with minds thus evaporated and filled with these follies, they find every thing there disagreeable, and especially their husbands, who, being taken up with their affairs, are not always in the humour of paying them those ridiculous complaisances which are given to women in plays, in romances, and in the romantic life."

——"Those deceive themselves extremely, who think that plays make no ill impression on them, because they do not find them excite any formed evil desire. There are many degrees before one comes to an entire corruption of mind; and it is always extremely hurtful to the soul, to destroy the ramparts which secured from temptation."

"One does not begin to fall when the fa.. becomes sensible; the fallings of the soul are slow, they have preparations and progressions; and it often happens, that we are overcome by temptations, only by our having weakened our-

selves in occasions which seemed of no importance: it being certain, that he who despises little things, shall fall by little and little."

"It must not be imagined that the wicked maxims of which plays are full, are not hurtful, because people do not go there to form their sentiments, but to divert themselves; for they do not fail of making impressions, notwithstanding, without being perceived,——For instance, the opinion that the chimera of honour is so great a good, that it must be preserved, even at the expense of life, is what produces the brutal rage of the gentlemen of France. If those who fight a duel were never spoken of but as fools and madmen—as indeed they are; if that phantom of honour, which is their idol, were never represented but as a chimera and a folly; if care were taken never to form any image of revenge, but as of a mean and cowardly action; the resentment which men feel upon an affront would be infinitely weaker; but that which exasperates and renders it the more lively, is the false impression, that there is cowardice in bearing an affront. Now it cannot be denied that plays, which are full of these evil maxims, do greatly contribute to fortify that impression; because the mind being by them transported, and entirely out of itself, instead of correcting those sentiments, abandons itself to them without resistance, and delights to feel the motions they inspire, which dispose it to produce the like upon occasion."

——"God does not impute to us the coldness which proceeds from the withdrawing of his light, or merely from the heaviness of this body; but, no doubt, he imputes to us that to which we have contributed by our negligence, and our vain diversions. It is his will that we should

esteem nothing so much as the gracious gift which he has made us of his love; and that we should be careful to preserve it by giving it nourishment. This command he has intimated to us in the persons of the priests in the ancient law, whom he ordains always to maintain the fire on the altar, and to take care to put wood upon it every day in the morning. This altar is the heart of man, and every Christian is the priest; who ought to be careful to nourish the fire of charity on the altar of his heart, by putting wood every day upon it; that is to say, maintaining it by the meditation of divine things, and by exercises of piety. Now, if those who go to plays have yet any sense of piety, they cannot disown that plays deaden, and tend to entirely extinguish devotion; so that they should not doubt, God judges them extremely guilty, for having made so little account of his love, that instead of nourishing and endeavouring to augment it, they have not feared to extinguish it by their vain diversions: and that he will impute to them as a great sin, the abatement or the loss of their love to him. For if a dissipation of the goods of the world and of earthly riches, by luxury and gaming, is no little sin, what must be judged of a dissipation of the goods of grace, and of that precious treasure the Scripture speaks of, which we ought to purchase by the loss of all the goods, and all the pleasures of this life?"

FROM CHIEF JUSTICE HALE.

"BEWARE of too much recreation. Some bodily exercise is necessary, for sedentary men

especially; but let it not be too frequent, nor too long. Gaming, taverns, and plays, as they are pernicious, and corrupt youth, so if they had no other fault, they are justly to be declined, in respect to their excessive expense of time, and habituating men to idleness and vain thoughts, and disturbing passions and symptoms, when they are past, as well as while they are used."

Clarke, in his Essay on Study, speaking of plays and romances, says——"By what I have seen of them, they are generally very indiscreetly and foolishly written, in a way proper to recommend vanity and wickedness, rather than discredit them; they have a strong tendency to corrupt and debauch the mind with silly, mischievious notions of love and honour, and other things relating to the conduct of life."

Archbishop Tillotson, on the subject of plays, says——"They are intolerable, and not fit to be permitted in a civilized, much less a Christian nation. They do most notoriously minister to vice and infidelity. By their profaneness, they are apt to instil bad principles into the minds of men, and to lessen that awe and reverence which all men ought to have of God and religion; and by their lewdness, they teach vice, and are apt to infect the minds of men, and dispose them to lewd and dissolute practices."

ROLLIN, Principal of the University of Paris, and a zealous advocate for the moral and religious education of youth, recites the following passage from the writings of Rochefoucault, with approbation:

"All great diversions are dangerous to a Christian: but of all that have been invented, there is none we have so much reason to fear as plays. The passions, in these entertainments, are so naturally and artfully delineated, that they are excited by them, and imprinted on our hearts, especially that of love; and this more forcibly, when it is represented as chaste and honest: for the more innocent it appears to innocent souls, the more strongly are they disposed to be affected with it."

THE FOLLOWING ARE TAKEN FROM THE WORKS OF WILLIAM LAW.

——"THE pleasures and diversions of people are certain means for judging of the state of their minds: nothing can please or affect us, but what is according to our nature, and which finds something within us that is suitable to itself. Had we not inward dispositions of tenderness and compassion, we should not find ourselves softened with miserable objects. In like manner, had we not in our nature lively seeds of those disorders which are acted upon the stage, were there not some inward corruption, that finds itself gratified by the irregular passions that are there represented, we should find no more pleasure in the stage, than blind men find in pictures. If impure speeches, if wanton amours, if wild

passions, and immoral rant, can give us any delight, is it not past all doubt, that we have something of all these disorders in our nature?"

——"You own that God has called you to great purity of conversation; that you are forbid all *foolish discourse* and *filthy jesting*, as expressly as you are forbid swearing: and that you are told, to *let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth;* and yet you go to a house of corrupt communication: you hire persons to entertain you with ribaldry, profaneness, rant, and impurity of discourse; who are to present you with poisonous sentiments, and lewd imaginations, dressed up in elegant language, and to make wicked, vain, and impure discourse more lively and delightful, than you could possibly have it in any ill company. Is not this sinning with a high hand, and grossly offending against the plainest precepts of Scripture?"

——"There is no doctrine of our blessed Saviour that more concerns all Christians, or is more essential to their salvation than this:—— "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall "see God."——Now, take the stage in its best state, when some admired tragedy is upon it; are the extravagant passions of distracted lovers, the impure ravings of inflamed heroes, the joys and torments of love, and refined descriptions of lusts—are the indecent actions, the amorous transports, the wanton address of the actors, which make so great a part of the most sober and modest tragedies—are these things consistent with this Christian doctrine of purity of heart?"

——"As prejudices, the force of education, the authority of numbers, the way of the world, the example of great names, may make people

believe, so the same causes may make people act, against all sense and reason, and be guilty of practices which are utterly inconsistent with the purity of their religion."

——"All people who enter into these houses of entertainment, or contribute the smallest mite towards them, must look on themselves as having been, so far, friends to the most powerful instruments of sensuality; and to be guilty of contributing to an open and public exercise of splendid impurity and profaneness. When we encourage any good design, either with our consent, our money, our presence, we are apt to take a great deal of merit to ourselves: we presently conclude, that we are partakers of all that is good and praise-worthy in it, of all the benefit that arises from it, because we are contributors towards it. A man does not think that he has no share in some public charity, because he is but one in ten thousand that contribute towards it: but if it be a religious charity, and attended with great and happy effects, his conscience tells him, that he is a sharer of all that great good to which he contributed. Now, let this teach us how we ought to judge of the guilt of encouraging any thing that is bad, either with our consent, our money, or our presence. We must not consider how much our single part contributes towards it, how much less we contribute than several thousands of other people; but we must look at the whole thing in itself; and whatever there is of evil in it, or whatever evil arises from it, we must charge ourselves with a share of the whole guilt of so great an evil."

——"People of fashion and quality have great advantage above the vulgar; their condition and education give them a liveliness and

brightness of parts, from whence one might justly expect a more exalted virtue. How comes it then, that we see as ill morals, as little religious wisdom, and as great disorders among them, as among the most rude, uneducated part of the world? It is because *the politeness of their lives, their course of diversions and amusements, and their way of spending their time*, as much extinguish the wisdom and light of religion, as the grossness and ignorance of the dullest part of the world. Any way of life *that darkens our minds, that misemploys our understanding, that fills us with a trifling spirit, that disorders our passions, that separates us from the Spirit of God*, is the same certain road to destruction, whether it arise from stupid sensuality, rude ignorance, or polite pleasures. Had any one therefore, the power of an apostle, or the tongue of an angel, it would be well employed, in exposing, and dissuading from those ways of life, which wealth, corruption, and extreme politeness, have brought among us. We, indeed, only call them diversions; but they do the whole work of idolatry and infidelity, and fill people with so much blindness and hardness of heart, that they neither live by wisdom, nor feel the want of it, but are content to play away their lives with scarce any attention to the approaching scenes of death, judgment, and eternity."

FROM HANNAH MORE'S "STRICTURES ON THE MODERN SYSTEM OF FEMALE EDUCATION."

"I would take leave of those amiable and not ill-disposed young persons, who complain of the rigour of human prohibitions, and declare, "they meet with no such strictness in the Gospel," by asking them, with the most affectionate earnestness, if they can conscientiously reconcile their nightly attendance at every public place which they frequent, with such precepts as the following: "Redeeming the time:"—"Watch and pray:"—"Watch, for ye know not at what time your Lord cometh:"—"Abstain from *all appearance* of evil:"—"Set your affections on things above."

"And I would venture to offer one criterion, by which the persons in question may be enabled to decide on the positive innocence and safety of such diversions; I mean, provided they are sincere in their scrutiny and honest in their avowal. If, on their return at night from those places, they find they can retire, and "commune with their own hearts;" if they find the love of God operating with undiminished force on their minds; if they can "bring every thought into subjection," and concentrate every wandering imagination; if they can soberly examine into their own state of mind; I do not say if they can do all this perfectly and without distraction (for who can do this at any time?) but if they can do it with the same *degree* of seriousness, pray with the same *degree* of fervour, and

renounce the world in as great a *measure* as at other times; and if they can lie down with a peaceful consciousness of having avoided in the evening "that temptation" which they had prayed not to "be led" into in the morning, they may then more reasonably hope that all is well, and that they are not speaking false peace to their hearts."

"If this test were fairly used; if this experiment were honestly tried; if this examination were conscientiously made, may we not without offence presume to ask,—*Could* our numerous places of public resort, *could* our ever-multiplying scenes of more select but not less dangerous diversion, nightly overflow with an excess hitherto unparalleled in the annals of pleasure!"

FROM W. WILBERFORCE'S "PRACTICAL VIEW OF THE PREVAILING RELIGIOUS SYSTEM OF PROFESSED CHRISTIANS," &c.

"I am well aware that I am now about to tread on very tender ground: but it would be an improper deference to the opinions and manners of the age altogether to avoid it. There has been much argument concerning the lawfulness of theatrical amusements. Let it be sufficient to remark, that the controversy would be short indeed, if the question were to be tried by this criterion of love to the Supreme Being. If there were any thing of that sensibility for the honour of God, and of that zeal in his service, which we show in behalf of our earthly friends, or of our political connexions, should we seek our pleasure in that place which the debauchee, inflamed with wine, or bent on the gratification of other licentious appetites, finds most congenial to his state and temper of mind? in that place, from the neighbourhood of which (how justly termed a school of morals might hence alone be inferred) decorum, and modesty, and regularity, retire, while riot and lewdness are invited to the spot, and invariably select it for their chosen residence; where the sacred name of God is often profaned; where sentiments are often heard with delight, and motions and gestures often applauded, which would not be tolerated in private company, but which may far exceed the utmost licence allowed in the social

circle, without at all trangressing the large bounds of theatrical decorum; where, when moral principles are inculcated, they are not such as a Christian ought to cherish in his bosom, but such as it must be his daily endeavour to extirpate: not those which Scripture warrants, but those which it condemns as false and spurious, being founded in pride and ambition, and the over-valuation of human favour."

CONCLUSION.

IT must be evident to every sober and unprejudiced mind, that the sentiments of these virtuous and enlightened persons, on the corrupting influence, and the fatal amusements, of the theatre, merit the most serious and attentive consideration: and to some minds, it is apprehended, they will appear to be solid and awakening reflections.

If it be true, that many profane, indecent, and irreligious sentiments are to be found in the works of dramatic writers, and these sentiments coloured with the softest names, and recommended on the stage by the most captivating characters and actions;—if the senses and imagination are so charmed with the elegance of the scenery, the richness of the dresses, the power of the music, the address of the performers, and the gaiety and slpendour of the whole surrounding scene, as to deprive the mind of sober reflection, and agitate it too much for receiving benefit from moral and rational instruction;—if these passionate fascinating exhibitions injure the delicacy of our best feelings, and gradually weaken our abhorrence of immoral indulgences;—if they frequently break down the ramparts of our virtue, and lay us open to the inroads and government

of vice and folly;—if they chiefly address the inferior powers of our nature, our senses, imaginations, and passions, and regale them with such high-seasoned enjoyments, as too often vitiate our moral taste, and not only indispose, but give us a disgust to every composition that is not much refined, and especially to the Holy Scriptures, and those sober and religious studies and engagements, which form the great duties of life, and promote our happiness here and hereafter;—if the persons who attend these places of diversion, do neither look for, nor receive, any serious impressions from them, but, on the contrary, often find their minds enervated, and accompanied with a vain and romantic spirit;—if they occupy, in the perusal and exhibition, in the preparation for them, and langour after them, so much of our precious time, as to prevent us from attending to necessary and important concerns; and thus also superinduce habits of indolence and dissipation;—if they abound with flattering pictures of the world, and present, to the youthful mind especially, such highly finished and captivating views of human life and happiness, as are seldom or never realized; and hence, besides an aversion or indifference to the ordinary duties and affairs of mankind, not unfrequently produce deep anxiety, disappointment, and discontent, through time;—if it be of importance to preserve the principles and manners of the rising generation pure and untainted, to prevent them from being governed by their imagination and passions, and to encourage in them modesty, humility, moderation, and a reverence for piety and virtue;—if religion and goodness must be supported by constant care and vigilance, and our preservation from evil depends on our avoiding temptation, and praying daily

for divine assistance against it;—if many great and good men have borne public testimony against the pernicious tendency of these amusements; and if numbers of serious and worthy characters of all denominations, have been convinced of the evils connected with them, and thought it their duty to avoid and discourage the attendance and support of them;—if Christianity teaches us to consider ourselves as strangers and pilgrims, travelling towards a better country; and admonishes us not to love the world, nor to be conformed to its vain customs and fashions, but to be transformed by the renewing of our minds, and to maintain a steady self-denial against the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life;—if these are the common effects and consequences of dramatic entertainments, and truths which cannot fairly be controverted, can we hesitate to acknowledge, that they are of the highest moment, and that it is incumbent upon us not to expose our principles and virtue to the influence of temptations, which are the more dangerous, as they are highly pleasing, little suspected, and seldom opposed?

What advantages can they yield us, that will compensate the loss or hazard of interests so important? All the pleasures, and all the refinements which their warmest votaries have ever found in them, are indeed a poor recompense for the corruption, extravagance, and misery, which they have too frequently sown the seeds of, and produced in human life.

It becomes us then, as rational beings, as Christians, who are called to renounce the vanities of this transient, precarious state, and who have a permanent and better world in view, to assert the dignity of our nature, and to act con-

formably to the importance of our destination. A few fleeting years will bring us all to the verge of an awful scene, when the vain diversions and pastimes, which are now so highly prized, will appear in their true light, a most lamentable abuse of that precious time and talent with which we have been intrusted, for the great purpose of working out our souls' salvation. At that solemn period, the great business of religion, a pious and virtuous life, dedicated to the love and service of God, will appear of inestimable value, and, in the highest degree, worthy of the concern and pursuit of reasonable beings. Happy will it be for us, if we become wise in time, take up the cross to all insnaring pleasures, for the few remaining days of our lives, and steadily persevere, under the Divine aid, in fulfilling the various duties assigned us, and in making suitable returns to the Author of all good, for the unmerited blessings which he hath bountifully bestowed upon us. In these exalted employments we shall experience the noblest pleasures, and feel no want of empty and injurious entertainments, to occupy our minds, or to fill up our time. In the scenes and productions of nature, and in the useful works of art; in the faithful narratives of human life, and the descriptions of interesting objects; in the endearments of social and domestic intersourse; in acts of charity and benevolence; and in the pleasing reflections of an upright and self-approving mind, we shall perceive also abundant sources of innocent refreshment and true cheerfulness, as well as the means of enlarging our understandings and improving our hearts.

May those persons, therefore, who have doubts respecting the propriety of indulging themselves in theatrical amusements, and indeed, may all

who read these lines, seriously consider the hazard of such indulgences, and give the subject that attention which its importance demands. May those especially who are convinced of their dangerous nature and tendency, reject with abhorrence the solicitations of appetite and pleasure, and the fallacious reasonings, which are often adduced in their support. May we never be imposed on by the common, but delusive sentiments, that moral and religious improvement is to be acquired from such impure mixtures: and that the literary merit, and accurate knowledge of the human heart, which are displayed in many parts of dramatic works, will atone for the fatal wounds which innocence, delicacy, and religion, too frequently suffer from these performances. But being convinced that depraved nature will ever select what is most congenial to itself; and that the pleasures derived from refined composition, and the exhibitions of taste and elegance, may be purchased at too dear a rate, let us resolutely and uniformly oppose what we believe to be evil, however it may be arrayed; and do our utmost to discourage, by our example and influence, those powerful and destructive engines of dissipation, profaneness, and corruption.

THE END.

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ON

SILENT WAITING

UPON GOD,

IN

Religious Assemblies.

By THOMAS COLLEY.

" In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength."
Isa. xxx. 15.

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WHEN we contemplate the glorious attributes of the Most High, his wisdom, power, and goodness, and the dependent state of man, we are led to believe that divine worship is an essential part of man's duty to him, as from a reasonable creature to a merciful and bountiful Creator; and that he hath an undoubted right to adoration and obedience from such dependent beings, agreeably with the command: "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.*"

This is acknowledged by Christians of all denominations, who believe it right to assemble at stated times for the purpose of worship; although they differ widely as to the manner of it. It is not my intention in this essay, to examine the different modes of worship practised in the world; but to point out the advantage that may be derived from true silence, and how necessary it is for receiving a just sense of our particular states and duties; as also its consistency with the gospel dispensation.

A congregation of people sitting down in silence, and sometimes continuing so throughout the meet-

* Mat. iv. 10.

ing, hath been matter of wonder to many, and the subject of various conjectures and remarks. Some have concluded that all the time so spent hath been lost, and that no edification was to be received from it. Others have exclaimed, What does this people mean? and then have endeavoured to account for it by supposing, that because there are divers things among other professions which we cannot reconcile or unite with, so we have chosen this form as distinguishable from them. Silence in worship is in itself very simple, and there is something in it little understood and much despised by most professors of religion. If upon investigation it has no ground to support it, let it be done away: but if on the other hand, it has sufficient foundation both in scripture and reason, then let mankind embrace it, and receive all the benefit resulting from it. There is this advantage in true silence, that the enemy cannot counterfeit it: there is no exercise whatever where self is more shut out.

The silence which we are engaged to promote both by example and precept, is not merely a cessation from words, or a settling into outward stillness; for that may be acquired by habit, and the mind still left at large, ranging among created objects, a stranger to the true object of worship, and to that rest which is prepared for the Lord's people. It is a silence of the mind wherein living

faith * is essentially necessary; the awfulness and benefit of which state are better felt than described. Here, the soul is prepared to worship in newness of life; from which must come any thing that is rightly spoken, either in the way of preaching, prayer, or praise; or it cannot reach the state of a congregation; and except that be the case, silence is better; because when such as are in this state maintain the watch, and abide under the influence and power of the Spirit, they become co-workers therewith; and their spirits are baptized into a sympathy with the state one of another; and the Spirit of Truth, which is the principal object in their view, being lively and powerful, arises and spreads from vessel to vessel, until it frequently becomes to these as a flood bearing down all opposition.

That worship under the gospel is a spiritual exercise, adapted to a spiritual dispensation, appears evident from the concurring testimonies of the sacred writings; and is the substance of that ceremonial worship figured forth and practised under the law, but contradistinguished from it, and set forth as far excelling it both in nature and degree.

After our Lord's ascension to that glory which he had with the Father before the world was, he condescended to declare, "Behold, I stand at the

* Heb. xi. 6.

door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me*." Now, as this visitation is in spirit unto the heart or soul of man, can any thing be more consistent with the nature of things than to sit down in awful silence; having the attention of the mind steadily fixed on that which visiteth; waiting in faith for the springing up of divine life in the soul, according to this promise, "I will come in." As man happily experiences this, he can 'sit under his own vine, and under his own fig-tree, where none can make him afraid.'

When our Lord conversed with the woman of Samaria, she appeared desirous of knowing the true place of worship, saying, "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship: Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father: ye worship ye know not what; we know what we worship:" "but the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a spirit; and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth.†" This passage

* Rev. iii. 20. † John iv. 20—24.

points out, in the first place, the necessity of knowing the object of our worship; and secondly, that he must be worshipped in spirit and in truth.

The apostle said to the Philippians, "We are the circumcision which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh*." They were therefore come to the substance of the former shadowy dispensation. It is not consistent with the nature of things for one shadow to point out another, but always the substance: hence it is said, "We are the circumcision which worship God in the spirit;" not retaining any of the old rituals, or having any confidence in the flesh. Then doth it not appear most consistent with the dignity of the gospel, and the solemnity with which divine worship ought to be performed, to sit down in awful silence, and wait to feel the mind divinely influenced? when if any pray, it will be with the spirit, and with the understanding also: for, if in the primitive church, men so highly dignified as they were with the gifts of the Holy Spirit, knew not what to pray for as they ought, but as the Spirit helped their infirmities, with groanings which could not be uttered †; then let it not seem strange that we should also be unable to pray without spiritual assistance.

Assembling together for the purpose of divine

* Phil. iii. 3. † Rom. viii. 26.

worship, embraceth three principal objects; first, the testifying of our duty to, and dependence upon our great and gracious Benefactor, in whom we live and move and have our being: secondly, the renewing of our spiritual strength in him; and thirdly, the edification one of another. These objects ought always to be in view in all our religious meetings; and first—Our duty as finite creatures, to a merciful and bountiful Benefactor. If we contemplate the greatness and majesty of Him who formed and upholdeth all things; who is King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; who dwelleth in the high and holy place, and inhabiteth eternity; of whom the prophet said, "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting thou art God*;" under such a sense of the supreme Majesty, who is glorious in holiness, and fearful in praises, the profoundest adoration and worship are called for, and we believe they are witnessed in solemn silence. But it is to be noted, the work of faith is opposed by the power of darkness†, and though it may sustain close conflicts, set forth by "the fiery trial;" yet as it continues to be exercised in the power of God, it will obtain the victory, and that saying of

* Psalm xc. 2. † Eph. vi. 12.

Christ will be explained: 'If ye have faith as a grain of mustard-seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and it shall be done*.' This brings to the second thing to be considered; namely, the renewing of our strength in the Lord.

When our Lord was reasoning with the Jews on the subject of his divinity, and of that divine life which he came to restore and raise up in the soul of man; in order to turn their views to him the source of life, he said, "Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of Man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed." "The bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world." Again, "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst†." From all which we infer, that it is his divine nature or spirit that he is calling them to, agreeably to his own saying, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life‡." Is it not then evident, that silently waiting for the drawing influence of the Father's love to bring the soul to Christ, is highly profitable, if not indispensably necessary? especially if we

* Matt. xvii. 20, xxi. 21. † John vi. 27, 33, 35
‡ John vi. 63.

consider what Christ hath said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me, draw him*." Again, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give, is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life:" "for my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me†." As this evidently pointeth out divine virtue inwardly communicated, and received through faith, as a source of support adapted to the soul, and whereby spiritual strength is renewed; so it clearly manifests the necessity of a watchful, attentive disposition, in order to receive those divine communications; and, what state so suitable as that of awful silence?

The receiving of the quickening virtue of Christ in our souls, and feeding thereupon, is represented by eating and drinking; which is actually possessing the means of life; not receiving it in a figure or representation, but the very thing itself: as our Lord said, "He that eateth me,

* John vi. 44. † ib. ver. 31. 54—57.

even he shall live by me." This is that spiritual food prepared for the soul's sustenance, even in its militant probationary state; not as a transient visitation in the morning of the day, and no more known of it but in the recollection, or the experience of other men; but as the body stands in need of daily supplies of food, in order to its retaining a proper degree of health and vigour; so the soul doth require to be daily fed with that heavenly food, to be nourished up to eternal life.

However this may have been neglected or overlooked, it remains to be the transcendent glory of the gospel dispensation: this is the object we have in view; and to which we desire to attain in all our approaches to God, both in private retirement, or with our families, and in the congregation for public worship; and we have not found a more excellent way, than to sit down in silence, and endeavour to come to Christ: to feel access opened to him, through the power of an operative faith; which being "the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen," we may hereby participate in those treasures which neither ear hath heard, nor heart conceived; but, blessed be the name of the God of truth! he revealeth them by his Spirit, to the attentive waiting soul. And though there may not be a word spoken outwardly, such will not be dissappointed; their dependence not be-

ing on man but on the Lord, they are admitted to that supper promised by Christ to such as hear his voice and open to him the door; his promise being that he will sup with them, and they with him. He will receive of their obedience, and dedication of heart, as sweet incense; while their souls are feeding, in the silence of all flesh, on that divine nourishment which he has prepared for them: and thus by waiting upon the Lord, they renew their strength*.

Thirdly, It is in this strength, that true edification is administered. I shall be short on this head, as the subject has been largely and ably handled by Robert Barclay, in his Apology for the true Christian Divinity, (Proposition on Worship,) to which I refer; but I shall just mention a passage or two shewing in what light the Apostle Paul viewed the subject; and see if our practice does not coincide therewith.

"He ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men†." These gifts were to be employed for this excellent purpose; "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry," and "for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come, in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man‡;" but how these gifts are applied, he explains more particularly a little

* Isa. xl. 31. † Eph. iv. 8. ‡ ver. 12, 13.

further on, where he is shewing the connexion that subsists between Christ and the church, and the dependent state in which the church is placed; where Christ is represented as the head, from whom the whole body, having nourishment ministered, being "compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying of itself in love*." Now this appears evident, that if what every joint supplieth must be according to the effectual working in the measure in them, there can be no inconsistency in silently waiting for the evidence of the measure being renewed in their hearts, that thereby they might become co-workers with it.

Although it is comfortable and edifying to sit under a ministry which hath its supplies from the gift of Christ, yet the edification of a religious meeting doth not altogether depend on outward means, as preaching, &c. for whatever tends to increase the weight and solemnity of a meeting, contributes to its edification. Now, as individuals are gathered to their proper exercise, and attend to the effectual working in the measure in themselves, an increase is experienced; and as the Spirit of Christ is one in all, baptizing the different members into a joint travail and sympathy one with and for another, as that exercise

* Eph. iv. 16.

is maintained, the spring of life is not only opened in individuals, but spreads from vessel to vessel; thus an increase is witnessed, and the body is edified in love.

The manifestation of Christ in the heart, hath not only a quickening property*, whereby a divine life is raised in the soul, and nourishment ministered, by which that life may be sustained; but he is made unto us, "wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption†." Notwithstanding all the advantages which we may receive from without; either from the sacred writings, from testimonies of those engaged in the ministry, the writings and experiences of other men, or the faculty of reason in ourselves; yet there occur many cases, wherein we are entirely dependent on a higher principle, for wisdom to direct. I will just instance one, which will shew that others may be in the same circumstance; that is, with regard to the ministry. What source of information is there, short of divine intelligence inwardly conveyed to the mind by Christ, that is sufficient to satisfy one man, that it is his duty to preach the gospel, and 'woe unto him,' if he preach it not; and at the same time doth permit another to be silent, without incurring that woe! The other parts of that excellent description, are equally important, that is, "righteousness, and

* Eph. ii. 1, 5, 6. † 1 Cor. i. 30.

sanctification, and redemption:" it is as Christ comes to be raised and formed in us*, and we united unto him by faith, that he becomes the Lord our righteousness; and we are accepted in him the beloved; so also he is our sanctification; he is the cause producing the effect. The term includes the idea of cleansing, and the process is gradual, adapted to the degrees of impurity imbibed through unbelief and disobedience. "There are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all†." The whole is comprised in this passage, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire‡." The diversity of operations is illustrated by different similitudes, as "The washing of water by the word‖;" in others, the day burning "as an oven§;" and "a refiner's fire," and "fuller's soap¶:" in all he is the great operator; and as our attention is fixed on him in true resignation, and we in humble confidence wait for the renewings of the Holy Spirit in our souls, whereby the work is carried on, our hearts become purified through faith. Thus he is likewise our Redeemer, our Saviour, our Deliverer, and Protector: so long as we remain in a tabernacle of flesh, and in a militant state, so long we shall need his preserving power; for "the just shall live by faith**."

* Gal iv. 19. † 1 Cor. xii. 6. ‡ Matt. iii. 11. ‖ Eph. v. 26
§ Mal. iv. 1. ¶ Ibid. iii. 2. ** Gal. iii. 11.

From what has been said, I think it must appear evident to every candid inquirer after truth, that, for receiving Christ in those important offices, and which cannot be obtained but through the medium of living faith, there is no way wherein we can be engaged, so much adapted to the attaining of this great end, as this silent exercise of mind.

Some perhaps may say, If there is so much advantage derived from this silent exercise, how comes it to pass that none have found it besides you? and is it not somewhat extraordinary, that the scriptures do not recommend the practice?—On which I shall make a few observations. There are many passages which I think evidently favour the practice. I will therefore just mention a few: The first and great commandment was ushered in with, "Hear, O Israel*;" this was the first thing to be attended to: here their attention must be fixed, that they might with more certainty receive the subsequent command. When the Most High was expostulating with the people by his servant the prophet, on the unprofitableness of their outward worship, while they remained strangers to that which is inward and spiritual, he said, "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread; and your labour for that which satisfieth not?" and then

* Mark xii 29.

he calls their attention to himself, saying, "Hearken diligently unto me;" "incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David: behold, I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people*." This passage is so evangelical, and so adapted to a spiritual dispensation, that had the prophet lived in gospel times, he scarcely could have chosen language more suitable: and as it so well applies to the present subject, I shall make upon it the following reflections.

Here the nobility and dignity of the gospel is displayed; the way is opened by which lost, bewildered man may come to Christ, and experience life through him; and here the ground is manifested, whereon man may move with acceptance before him. Can any thing be more plain, than that to hearken diligently to him, to incline the ear, and to come unto him, requires a state of deep inward attention, because it is only by the spirit that we have access to him. Christ remains through all generations, the way, the truth, and the life: and none can come to the Father but by him, who is that precious medium between God and man whereby the souls of his children are not only quickened, but

* Isaiah lv. 2—4.

raised up together, and, at seasons, made to sit together in heavenly places in him*: here is the state or ground in which acceptable worship is performed, in spirit and in truth.

Christ is the good shepherd, who not only knows his sheep but is known of them; who said, "When he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them†:" and as he is the commander of his people, in order that due subordination and proper decorum may be preserved, it is necessary that a strict attention be paid to his commands—to wait for his orders with becoming diffidence and reverence. How would it look in a company of people approaching some great personage, who had a right to their obedience, and whose prerogative it was to appoint them their service, and on whom they depended for daily subsistence; if, instead of waiting for his directions, they should instantly begin extolling his greatness, and praising his goodness; and perhaps in a language that neither suited their states nor station? Might they not expect to receive from him a reproof?

If this would not be acceptable to man, what can we think of those customary exercises practised amongst many professed Christians, who upon entering their place of worship, instead

* Eph. ii. 6. † John x. 4.

of waiting for the preparation of the heart from the Lord to be known; presently begin singing, as they suppose to the praise and glory of God! And oftentimes, it is to be feared, without considering that, if the sacrifices of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord, so also must their praises be: besides, if they make use of words which do not apply to their state, as when they repeat the sayings of David, "All the night make I my bed to swim; I water my couch with my tears*;" again, "Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law†;" others appealing to the Searcher of hearts after this manner, "My heart, thou knowest, can never rest, till thou create my peace:" can it for a moment be supposed, that this language can fitly apply to the states of a whole congregation? Might they not reasonably expect this reproof, "Who hath required this at your hand?" would it not better become the solemnity of a religious congregation, to attend unto that command, "Be still, and know that I am God‡?"

But to return to the subject, the prophet Habakkuk expressing a state of silent attention, saith, "I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me;" or, as the margin hath

* Ps. vi. 6. † Ps. cxix. 136. ‡ Ps. xlvi. 10.

it, "what he will say in me*." Again we read, "Be silent, O all flesh, before the Lord: for he is raised up out of his holy habitation†:" again, "Keep silence before me, O islands, and let the people renew their strength; let them come near; then let them speak‡." "The Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him‖." Now if silently waiting upon the Lord, was so powerfully inculcated, and so forcibly enjoined, under an outward and typical dispensation, which in many respects was declared to be but as the shadow of good things to come; it is reasonable to conclude that with this spiritual dispensation which bringeth life and immortality to light, it is particularly consonant. I shall close these quotations with that encouraging declaration of the Most High: "They shall not be ashamed, that wait for me§."

But should any still say, Is there not danger, in avoiding one extreme, of running into another? and that, although there may be too much formality in many outward forms, yet has not this silent waiting a tendency to settle people in a state of supineness and indifference, and to draw them off from the necessary duty of prayer? To which I answer, The silence which we speak of

* Hab. ii. 1. † Zech. ii. 13. ‡ Isa. xli. 1. ‖ Hab. ii. 20. § Isa. xlix. 23.

can have no such effect; but on the contrary, to increase the ardour and fervour of the soul, in proportion as it comes under the influence of the Spirit of Christ; for though we have no stated forms of prayer, either printed in books, or expressed at stated times extempore (whether the mind be influenced with the spirit of prayer or not); yet we are not restrained from waiting upon the Lord at stated times, as appears by our regular attendance of religious meetings, which duty it doth not require an immediate impulse to perform: but here lies the difference betwixt us and most other professors, that our time for uttering words is not always ready. Neither does it appear that prayer is confined to expressions in words, but rather consists in a union with the Spirit of Christ; in which state, the soul not only breathes forth its wants to him that seeth in secret, but derives the supplies it stands in need of: here the spirit of prayer is witnessed, which at seasons breaks forth in words, where one is made as mouth for the rest; at other times they find the truth of that testimony of the prophet, "Their strength is to sit still*;" knowing, from a degree of blessed experience, that 'the Lord keepeth those in perfect peace whose minds are stayed on him, because they trust in him †.'

* Isa. xxx. 7. † Isa. xxvi. 3.

Besides, there is no Christian duty more forcibly and generally enjoined than that of watching; "What I say unto you," said Christ to his disciples, "I say unto all, Watch*." There is no state to which this doth not apply, however men may vary in their views with respect to other things. It was the concern of the apostles to stir up the churches to watchfulness and prayer; "Watch thou in all things†," said Paul to Timothy; and to the Ephesians, "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit;" mark—in the Spirit: "watching thereunto with all perseverance‡." Watching hath an extensive signification; it implies, in the first place, a general oversight of our words and actions, and also of the thoughts and intents of the heart; and secondly, it implies a state of silent attention; "I will stand upon my watch," said the prophet Habakkuk, "and set me upon the tower; and will watch to see what he will say *in* me‖." Watching and waiting are terms synonymous; pointing out an exercise fitly adapted to spiritual worship; not transiently to feel the touches of divine grace, but to sit for some time under its influence and operation, as was expressed by the church formerly: "I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste§."

* Mark xiii. 37. † 2 Tim. iv. 5. ‡ Eph. vi. 18. ‖ Hab. ii. § Cant. ii.

Upon the whole, these being the latter days, or gospel dispensation, to which that glorious promise was made, " I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts*;" whereby all might come to know the Lord, from the least unto the greatest; it appears to me evident, that in order to a qualification to read that law, a silent abstracted state of mind is both requisite and necessary, and many can bless the Lord, from a degree of heart-felt experience of the precious effects thereof in their own souls; and are at times constrained to call to others " Come, taste and see how good the Lord is," in the abounding of that love which would have all mankind come, and have fellowship with the Father, and with his son Jesus Christ, and sit under the teaching of the " unction from the Holy One†," and have no need that man should teach them: when that glorious promise shall be accomplished, that the church shall be thus redeemed from all human dependence, and come to sit under the teaching of Him of whose coming it was said, All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be their peace; and in righteousness shalt thou be established‡; which state is described in that sublime and glorious strain of the evangelical prophet; " The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory: thy sun shall no

* Jer. xxxi. 33. Heb. viii. 10. †1 John ii. 20. 27. ‡ Isa. liv. 13, 14.

more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended*."

To conclude—as it was neither to Jerusalem or the mountain of Samaria, that true worship was to be confined; so neither is it in words, nor yet in silence merely, that true worship doth consist; without the requisite disposition of mind. The royal Psalmist, from a sense of the awfulness of the divine Majesty, and his own unworthiness as a finite creature, thus addressed the Great Object of worship: "Lord, what is man that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man that thou visitest him?†" "Thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering: the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit:" and then asserts with holy confidence; "A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou will not despise‡." The heaven is his throne, and the earth his footstool; yet he hath declared, that 'unto this man he will look, that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and who trembleth at his word§.' How different is this from a repetition of even the best set of words that can be composed, where they do not suit the state of the soul! Be not deceived; God is not mocked: such as every man soweth, such must he reap in the great and terrible day of the Lord, when he shall awaken men from their false and polluted rest; when the sinners in Zion shall be afraid,

* Isa. lx. 19. 20. † Ps. viii. 4. ‡ Psal. li. 16. 17.
§ Isaiah lxvi. 1 2.

and fearfulness surprise the hypocrite; when that language is sounded in their borders, 'Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom, but those that do the will of my Father which is in Heaven:' then, soft music, fine voices, and splendid appearances, will avail nothing in comparison of an humble heart, and a contrite spirit, set at the feet of Christ to hear his gracious words.

And you whose minds have happily been directed to the divine gift, and favoured to feel the virtue of its living power in your hearts, and to know the joyful sound; may ye be engaged in watchfulness and humility, to walk in the light of his countenance; being frequent and fervent both in a steady attendance of religious meetings, and in private retirement, where ye may pour forth your souls unto your father who is in secret. He who seeth in secret will reward such openly, by strengthening them with might by his Spirit in the inner man, to support their testimony for the truth in uprightness, and not to be ashamed to confess Christ and his gospel before men. By patient continuance in serving the Lord in their generation, in truth and faithfulness, these may happily witness, that the work of righteousness is peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever.

FINIS.

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THOUGHTS

ON

SOME IMPORTANT SUBJECTS;

SELECTED FROM THE

WRITINGS

OF THE EMINENT AND PIOUS

CHIEF JUSTICE HALE.

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Advertisement.

The character of Chief Justice Hale, *who presided in the Court of King's Bench, in the reign of Charles the Second, is so generally known, that to give any sketch of it here might be deemed superfluous. His "Contemplations Moral and Divine," the fruits of scanty but well-employed leisure, have been long held in esteem for piety of sentiment, and for the sound Christian instruction which they inculcate. In considering of such a selection from these as might come within the compass of a small pamphlet, the Editors were aware that they should find themselves somewhat embarrassed by the copiousness and variety of that from which the choice was to be made; but they conceived, that if nothing more could be given than a* specimen *of the Author's meditations, it would yet to many be acceptable.* This, *as it is exhibited in the following extracts, some of which are taken entire, others with more or less abridgment, shows, in common with many other parts of his writings, that he was a man more desirous to promote holiness of life, and the fear of God, the vital*

and essential principle of all true religion, than a regard for forms and ceremonies, on which, (though it may consist with them,) it is surely not dependent.

On submitting this Tract to the public, the Editors may express a desire and hope, in case it should fall into the hands of any who have as yet given but little consideration to the most important subject of Religion, that such persons will not omit seriously to peruse these reflections of a man of distinguished intellectual talents, in whose mind a confirmed belief in the truth of Christianity appears to have been the result of careful and candid examination.

THOUGHTS,

&c.

On the knowledge of Christ Crucified.

For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. 1 Cor. ii. 2.

AS once our Saviour, in relation of things to be done, pronounced one thing only necessary, *Luke* x. 42.; so the apostle, among the many things that are to be known, fixeth on one thing necessary to be known, Christ Jesus and him crucified. Not as if all other knowledge were condemned: Moses's learning was not charged upon him as a sin; Paul's secular learning was not condemned, but useful to him; to be knowing in our calling, in the qualities and dispositions of persons, in the laws under which we live, in the modest and sober inquiries of nature and arts, are not only not condemned, but commended, and useful, and such as tend to the setting forth the glory of the God of Wisdom.

Even the discretion of the husbandman God owns as his, *Isa.* xxviii. 26. "For his God doth instruct him to discretion, and doth teach him." But we must determine to know nothing in comparison of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, as the apostle counted what things were gain, yet to be loss for Christ, *Phil.* iii. 7.*

[As to the certainty of this knowledge] we have,—1. A constant tradition and reception by millions, before he came, that the Messias was to come; and since he came, that in truth he is come. 2. The apostles, evangelists, and disciples, that were purposely chosen to be witnesses of Christ's miracles, doctrine, suffering, and resurrection. 3. The miracles he did, that are witnessed to us by a greater consent of testimony, than any one part of any history of that antiquity. 4. The purity, sanctity, and justness of his doctrine, which was never attained unto in the teaching of the philosophers. 5. The prophecies. 6. The wonderful prevailing that the knowledge of Christ had upon the world, and this not only in fact, but backed with a prophecy, that it should be so. 7. The admirable concordance and symmetry, that this mystery of Christ makes in the whole method of the proceeding of God in the world. 8. Besides the undeniable prophecies, there bears witness to this truth, the secret powerful witness of the Spirit of God convincing the soul of the truth of Christ, beyond all the moral persuasions in the world, beyond the conviction of demonstration, to believe, to rest upon, to assert it, even unto the loss of life and all things.†

* "*Of the Knowledge of Christ crucified*," *Contemplations*, &c. *edit.* 1679, Part I. pp. 37, 38.

† *Ibid.* pp. 39, 40.

[Added to the certainty, is] the plainness and easiness of the truth. The most excellent subjects of other knowledge have long windings, before a man can come at them; and are of that difficulty and abstruseness, that as every brain is not fit to undertake the acquiring of it, so, much pains, labour, industry, advertency, assiduity, is required in the best of judgments, to attain but a competent measure of it. But in this knowledge it is otherwise; as it is a knowledge fitted for a universal use, the bringing of mankind to God, so it is fitted with a universal fitness and convenience for that use; easy, plain, and familiar. The poor receive the gospel, *Matt.* xi. 5. And indeed the plainness of the doctrine was that which made the wise world stumble at it, and thence it was, that it was hid from the wise and prudent, *Matt.* xi. 25. who, like Naaman with the prophet, could not be contented to be healed without some great ostentation; nor were contented to think any thing could be the wisdom of God, and the power of God, unless it were somewhat that were abstruse, and at least conformable to that wisdom they had; and were troubled to think that that wisdom or doctrine, that must be of so great use and end, should fall under the capacity of a fisherman, a maker of tents, a carpenter. But thus it pleased God to choose a doctrine of an easy acquisition, 1. That no flesh should glory in his presence. 1 *Cor.* i. 29. 2. That the way to salvation, being a common thing propounded to all mankind, might be difficult to none. Believe, and thy sins be forgiven. Believe, and thou shalt be saved. Believe, and thou shalt be raised up to glory. "This is the will of Him that sent me, that every one that seeth the Son and believeth on

him, may have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day." *John* vi. 40.*

But the subject of this knowledge is of the highest consideration; such as the very angels of heaven desire to look into, 1 *Pet.* i. 12, and behold with admiration that manifold wisdom of God, which is revealed unto us, poor worms, in Christ Jesus. Here is the privilege of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, that as it is of eminence and height, so it is of use and convenience, and that in the highest measure: as it is a pearl for beauty, so it is for value. This knowledge is a kind of Catholicon, of universal use and convenience. In reference to this life: Am I in want, in contempt, in prison, in banishment, in sickness, in death? This knowledge gives me contentedness, patience, cheerfulness, resignation of myself to His will, who hath sealed my peace with him, and favour from him, in the great covenant of his Son; and I can live upon this, though I were ready to starve; when I am assured that if it be for my good and the glory of his name, I shall be delivered; if not, I can be contented, so my jewel, the peace of God and my own conscience, by the blood of Christ be safe. Am I in wealth, honour, power, greatness, or esteem in the world? This knowledge teacheth me Humility, as knowing from whom I received it: Fidelity, as knowing to whom I must account for it: Watchfulness, as knowing the honour of my Lord is concerned in some measure in my carriage, and that the higher my employment is, the more obnoxious I am to temptation from without, from them that watch for my halting, and from within, by a deceitful heart. And

* *Ibid.* pp. 40, 41.

in all it teacheth me not to overvalue it, nor to value myself the more by it or for it; because the knowledge of Christ Jesus presents me with a continual object of a higher value, the price of the high calling of God in Christ. It teacheth me to look upon the glory of the world as rust, in comparison of the glory that excelleth, and the greatest of men as worms, in comparison of the great God. And as thus in reference to the temporal condition of my life, this knowledge of Christ is of singular use, and makes a man a better philosopher than the best of morals in reference thereunto; so it guides me in the management of all relations: 1. To God; it presents him unto me in that representation that is right, full of majesty, yet full of love, which teacheth me reverence, and yet access with boldness, love, and obedience. 2. To man; justice, giving every man his due, for so the knowledge of Christ teacheth me—Do as ye would be done by; mercy, to forgive; compassion, to pity; liberality, to relieve; sobriety, in the use of creatures, and yet comfort in the enjoying of them; a right use of the world, and yet a contempt of it, in comparison of my hope. It makes death not terrible, because a most sure passage to life. Here I find a way to get *all* my sins pardoned, whereas without this, all the world cannot contrive a satisfaction for *one*. I find a way to obtain such a righteousness as is valuable with God, and perfect before him, even the righteousness of God in Christ. And here I find the means, and only means, to avoid the wrath to come, the terror of the judgment of the great day; everlasting life unto all eternity, with the blessed God, and our Lord Jesus Christ, and all

the blessed angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect.*

As Christ Jesus is the most worthy subject of all knowledge, so Christ Jesus under this consideration, as "crucified," is that which is the fullest of wonder, admiration, love; this will appear if we consider amongst other particulars, who it was that thus suffered. It was Christ Jesus the eternal Son of God, clothed in our flesh; God and man united in one person; his manhood giving him a capacity of suffering, and his Godhead giving a value to that suffering; and each nature united in one person to make a complete Redeemer; the *Heir of all things*, Heb. i. 2. *The Prince of life*, Acts, iii. 15. *The Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world*, John, i. 9. As touching his Divine nature, *Over all, God blessed for ever*, Rom. ix. 5. And as touching his human nature, *full of grace and truth*, John, i. 14. And in both, the beloved Son of the eternal God, in whom he proclaimed himself well pleased, *Mat.* iii. 17.†

On the Fear of God, &c.

THE fear of God, the beginning of all true wisdom, gives a law to the sensitive appetite, brings it in subjection, keeps it within the limits and bounds of reason, and of those instructions and directions that the wise God hath prescribed. It keeps it under discipline and rule. It directs the passions to their proper objects, and keeps

* *Ibid.* p. 41,—44. † *Ibid.* p. 52—54.

them within their due measures, and within the due lines and limits of moderation, and as becomes a man that lives in the sight and observation of the God of glory, majesty, and holiness. It cures the diseases and distempers of the mind by the presence of this great preservative, the fear of God. If pride or vain-glory begins to bud in the soul, he considers that the God he fears, resists the proud. This fear puts a man in remembrance of the glorious majesty of the most glorious God; and what is a poor worm, that he should be proud or vain-glorious in the presence and sight of that mighty God? If ambition or covetousness begins to appear, this fear of God presently reminds a man that the mighty God hath prohibited them; that he hath presented unto us things of greater moment for our desires than worldly wealth or honour; that we are all of his household, and must content ourselves with that portion he allots us, without pressing beyond the measure of sobriety, or dependence upon, or submission unto him. If envy begins to live in our hearts, this fear of God crusheth it, by reminding us that the mighty God prohibits it, that he is the Sovereign Lord and Dispenser of all things; if he hath given me little, I ought to be contented; if he hath given another more, yet why should my eye be evil because his eye is good? Thus the fear of the Lord walks through the soul, and pulls up those weeds and roots of bitterness and folly that infect, disquiet, disorder, and befool it.*

The fear of the Lord of heaven and earth, being actually present upon the soul, and exert-

* "*Of Wisdom and the Fear of God,*" *Contemplations*, &c. p. 25.

ing itself, is the greatest motive and obligation in the world to consideration and attention touching things to be done or said. When a man is to do any thing, or speak, in the presence of a great earthly prince, the very awe and fear of that prince will give any man very much consideration touching what he saith or doeth, especially to see that it be conformable to those laws and edicts that this prince hath made. Now the great God of heaven and earth hath, in his holy word, given us laws and rules touching our words and actions; and what we are to say or do, is to be said or done in no less a presence than the presence of the ever-glorious God, who strictly eyes and observes every man in the world, with the very same advertence, as if there were nothing else for him to observe. And certainly, there cannot be imagined a greater engagement to attention and consideration than this: and therefore if the action or speech be of any moment, a man that fears God will consider, 1. Is this lawful to be done or not? if it be not, how shall I do this great evil and sin against God? 2. But if it be lawful, yet is it fit? is it convenient? is it seasonable? If not, then I will not do it, for it becomes not that Presence before whom I live. 3. Again, if the thing be lawful and fit, yet I will consider how it is to be done, what are the most suitable circumstances to the honour and good pleasure of that great God before whom I stand. And this advertence and consideration doth not only qualify my actions and words with wisdom and prudence, in contemplation of the duty I owe to God, but it gives an excellent opportunity very many times, by giving pause and deliberation in reference to my duty to God, to discover

many human ingredients of wisdom and prudence requisite to the choice of actions and words and the manner of doing them. So that besides the greater advantage of consideration and advertence, in relation to Almighty God, it doth superadd this advantage also for opportunity thereby of human prudential considerations, which otherwise by haste and precipitance in actions or words would be lost; and it habituates the mind to a temper of caution, and advertence, and consideration in matters as well of smaller as of greater moment, and so makes a wise, attentive, and considerate man.*

But besides all this, there is yet a secret but a most certain truth; which is, that those who truly fear God have a secret guidance from a higher wisdom than what is barely human; namely, by the Spirit of truth and wisdom, that doth really and truly, but secretly prevent and direct them. And let no man think that this is a piece of fanaticism. Any man that sincerely and truly fears Almighty God, relies upon him, calls upon him for his guidance and direction, hath it as really as the son hath the counsel and direction of his father: and though the voice be not audible, nor the direction always perceptible to sense, yet it is equally as real as if a man heard the voice saying, *This is the way, walk in it.* And this secret direction of Almighty God is principally seen in matters relating to the good of the soul; but it may also be found in the great and momentous concerns of this life, which a good man, that fears God and begs his direction, shall very often, if not at all times find. Besides this direction, a good

* *Ibid.* p. 27.

man, fearing God, shall find his blessing upon him. It is true that the portion of a man fearing God is not in this life; oftentimes he meets with crosses, afflictions, and troubles in it, his portion is of a higher and more excellent state and condition than this life; yet a man that fears God hath also his blessing in this life, even in relation to his very temporal condition: for either his honest and just intentions and endeavours are blessed with success and comfort; or if they be not, yet even his crosses and disappointments are turned into a blessing; for they make him more humble, and less esteeming this present world, and setting his heart upon a better. For it is an everlasting truth, that all things shall work together for the best to them that love and fear Almighty God; and therefore certainly such a man is the wisest man.*

I can call my own experience to witness, that even in the external actions, occurrences, and incidences of my whole life, I was never disappointed of the best guidance and direction, when in humility and sense of my own deficiency, and diffidence of my own ability to direct myself, or to grapple with the difficulties of my life, I have with humility and sincerity implored the secret direction and guidance of the Divine Wisdom and Providence. And I dare therein appeal to the vigilant and strict observation of any man's experience, whether he hath not found the same experience in relation to himself, and his own actions and successes; and whether those counsels and purposes which have been taken up after an humble invocation of the Divine direction, have not been always most successful in the end.†

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* *Ibid.* p. 30. † "*Of Humility*," *Contemplations*, &c. p. 146.

On Humility and Contentment.

TRUE humility is rooted in the very mind itself, and for the most part evidenceth its being there by these ensuing particulars:

1. A most awful and sincere reverence of the great and glorious God; an habitual prostration of our souls always before him, as the great and glorious Sovereign of heaven and earth, in whose presence we always are, and to whom we owe an infinite subjection and dependence

2. A most high and constant gratitude and thankfulness of heart and soul to him, for all the good we have in us, or that is or can be enjoyed by us; recognising him as the Giver of our being, of our faculties, our abilities, and strength of mind and body, our wealth, our honour, our comforts, our hopes, and expectations; that he is not only the Giver of them, but the Sovereign Lord of them, and may resume them when he pleaseth.

3. And consequently upon this, that we owe to that great and Sovereign Lord a due employment of all, that he hath thus given us, to his glory and service; and that we must therefore be accountable for them, to him who is our great Lord, Proprietor, and Master.

4. A constant vigilancy and attention of mind upon all our thoughts, words, and actions; but especially, lest we forget that habitude of mind that we thus owe to Almighty God, and lest pride, arrogancy, vanity, or vain-glory steal in upon us; checking and plucking up the first

ebullitions and risings, the first buds and motions thereof.

5. Which is but the consequence of the former, a sober opinion concerning ourselves, and all we do, and say; not thinking of ourselves above what we ought to think: and since self-love so naturally adheres to us, to be very jealous of ourselves; especially in those actions that are good, or that meet with some applause in the world; lest we either value them too high, or overvalue ourselves by reason of them; or lest we are short in giving to Almighty God that honour that is due to him, and to him only, for them.

6. A diligent and impartial and frequent consideration, and examination, and animadversion of, and upon our defects and failings: for these, and these only are truly and properly our own. There is a sort of artificial pictures, that if a man look upon them one way, they represent some beautiful, comely person; but if we look upon them another way, they represent some deformed or mis-shapen monster: our own partiality to ourselves prompts us to look upon the picture of our lives and actions, in that position or posture that renders nothing but beautiful and virtuous; and we have seldom the patience to look upon it, in that position that may render our deformities and vices; and thereupon we give ourselves the denomination accordingly of good and virtuous, and either do not observe, or do not consider our own failings and defects. If we did as well consider our sins which we commit, as the duties which we perform: and if in the consideration of our duties, we did but consider how much more of duties we omit than we perform, and in the duties we perform, if we did

consider how much deadness, formality, hypocrisy, vain-glory, self-seeking, and other unhandsome ingredients were mingled with them; and should lay our sins, our omissions, our defects in one scale, and that which were really and truly duty, and good, and worthy in another scale, the best of mankind would soon find that which was truly good, in the whole course of his life, were a pitiful, slender scantlet, and would be infinitely outweighed by his sins, omissions, and defects; and the due comparison and prospect of this, would quickly give him a lecture of humility; the good we do, would indeed make us thankful, but the good we omit, the evil we commit, and the deficiencies of our duties would make us humble.

7. Charitable opinions of the persons of others, as far as possibly may be. It is true, that neither religion, nor charity commands, or allows, any man to say or think that that which is in itself a sin, is not so; as that drunkenness or whoredom, or pride, or vain-glory, are not sins: the law of God, and the law of nature tells us they are sins. But an humble man, sensible of his own sins and failings, will not presently be over-censorious of persons, or pronounce them reprobates, or men wholly destitute of the hope of salvation; but will pity their failings and backslidings; yet not exterminate them from heaven.*

Humility gives great moderation, and sobriety, and vigilancy in the fullest enjoyments of temporal felicity of any kind whatsoever. An humble man looks upon all his plenty and prosperity, not as his own, or the reward of his desert,

* *Ibid.* p. 134—137.

but as the depositum of the Great Master of the Family of Heaven and Earth, talents intrusted to him as a steward, and an accomptant, to employ for his master's use, service, and honour, not for his own grandeur or pleasure; he considers the more he hath, the greater is his account, and the greater his charge, and in it finds no matter to advance his thoughts concerning himself or to make him proud, but to make him the more careful how he employ it. And his humility is not diminished by his plenty, but rather increased; and this keeps him sober and moderate in the use of what he hath; for he looks upon all he hath, as none of his own, but his master's, to whom he is accountable; and as it makes him sober and moderate in the use of what he hath; so it makes him studious to employ it to the honour of his master, and faithful in that employment. Again, he looks upon the things of this world as dangerous temptations to deceive him of his innocence and integrity; for worldly grandeur secretly steals away the virtue of humility, or impairs it, sooner than any other. Pride is a kind of shadow, that ordinarily waits upon worldly prosperity; and therefore he keeps a strict guard over his heart, and watches narrowly the first blooming of worldly-mindedness, self-dependence, trusting in uncertain riches, making them his hope or his confidence, but especially upon swellings of vain-glory, pride, self-applause, and those other vermin that commonly breed in the soul, by the warm influences of prosperity. And to prevent the very first opportunities of their production, he watcheth himself upon all occasions; seriously reflects upon the danger he is in; carefully tries every emergent thought, word,

and action, whether it hath any secret tincture of pride or vanity.*

As to any damage or detriment that the humble man receives in the world, upon the very account of his humility, [it may be observed,] first, that this detriment is abundantly recompensed with the quiet and tranquillity, and evenness, and composedness of his mind. As a man possesseth his own soul by patience, so he doth by humility, namely, the composedness, right temper, and due state of his own mind, which no proud, or violent, or impatient man doth or can. But secondly, it is most certain, that though an humble man may upon the very score of his humility and meekness, receive a brush in the world; yet at the long run he gains advantage thereby, even in this present life. When I first read the saying of our Saviour, *Matt.* v. "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth," I looked upon it as a mere paradox, if applied to the comforts of this life; and therefore thought it must be merely and only intended of that new Heaven and new Earth wherein dwelleth righteousness, *2 Pet.* iii. 13. But upon deeper consideration I found it, in a great measure, true also of the former. For, 1. It is certain, that no proud man is truly loved by any but himself; but, so far as relates to his pride, every man hates him. One proud man hates another, and looks upon him as his enemy; and those very actions of pride that his own self-love makes him approve, or at least, allow in himself, he scorns or derides, in another. And though an humble man hath a common love to every man, though proud, or otherwise vi-

* "*Of Humility*," *Contemplations*, &c. p. 152—154.

cious, as being one of mankind, yet in relation to his pride he loves him not, nor approves. That very consideration therefore, that renders a proud man hated, or not loved, renders an humble man loved or approved; yea, and by the very proud man himself; for he looks upon him as no obstacle or impediment to the attaining of his ends, as one that is injurious to none, beneficent to all, gentle, and one that stands not in his way, giving all due respect, honour, and deference suitable to his place and dignity; he wisheth all the world were such as he, except himself, and therefore he respects and tenders him; and very oftentimes is a means of his protection and deliverance. 2. But further, it is a certain and experienced truth, that virtue and goodness, especially that of humility, hath a secret party and interest even in the worst of men; and men secretly love, or, at least, approve it in another, though they practice it not themselves; for virtue, goodness, and humility, have a congruity to the true and genuine frame of the human nature; and though men's lusts and passions may, in a great measure, obscure the consonancy to it, they can never extinguish it, but the mind and conscience will give a secret suffrage to it, wherever it finds it.*

Humility keeps the soul in great evenness and tranquility. The truth is, that the storms and tempests and disorders of the soul do not so much (if at all) arise from the things without us, as from the passions and distempers of the soul itself, especially that of pride and haughtiness, which as the wise man says, *Prov.* xiii. 10, is the mother of contention, and that within the very

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* *Ibid.* p. 161.

soul itself; as without, it is that which blows up the passions of anger, and revenge, and envy, and hatred, and impatience, and ambition, and vain-glory: and from hence it is, that the passions do rage, and swell, and roll one upon another like the sea troubled with a storm. But humility gives contentment in any condition or station. And the reason is, because an humble mind is never above that station or condition of life that the Divine Providence orders, but rather under or below it, or at the most holds pace with it. When the mind runs beyond the condition of a man, it is like a spendthrift, that lives beyond his estate; and therefore becomes necessarily poor, and never enjoys what it hath, because it busies itself evermore in an anxious pursuit of what it hath not. And that mind, that in relation to the things of the world, runs beyond its station, can never be contented nor quiet: and though such a man attain this year, what he anxiously pursued the last year, yet still his mind will be running further still, and keep before his acquests, as the fore-wheel of a coach will still run before the hinder wheel: but an humble man is ever contented with what the Divine Providence and honest industry allots him, and enjoys it comfortably and thankfully, and can sit down with a narrow [condition in life] with this contenting contemplation, That which I have is given by the bountiful God of liberality, not of debt; if I had less, it were more than I could deserve: for I can with Jacob say, out of the sense of my own unworthiness, "I am unworthy of the least of all his mercies, blessed therefore be his name."*

* *Ibid.* pp. 147. 149.

Our home, our country is heaven and everlasting happiness, where there are no sorrows, nor fears, nor troubles; this world is the place of our travel, and pilgrimage, and at the best our inn. Now when I am in my journey, I meet with several inconveniences; it may be the way is bad and foul, the weather tempestuous and stormy; it may be I meet with some rough companions, yet I content myself, for all will be mended when I come home: but if I chance to lodge at my inn, there it may be I meet with bad entertainment, the inn is full of guests, and I am thrust into an inconvenient lodging, or ill diet, yet I content myself, and consider it is no other than what I have reason to expect, it is but according to the common condition of things in that place; neither am I solicitous to furnish my lodgings with better accomodations, for I must not expect to make long stay there; it is but my inn, my place of repose for a night, and not my home; and therefore I content myself with it as I find it, all will be amended when I come home. In the same manner it is with this world; perchance I meet with an ill and uncomfortable passage through it, I have a sickly body, a narrow estate, meet with affronts and disgraces, lose my friends, companions, and relations, my best entertainment in it is but troublesome and uneasy: but yet I do content myself; I consider it is but my pilgrimage, my passage, my inn: it is not my country, nor the place of my rest: this kind of usage or condition is but according to the law and custom of the place, it will be amended when I come home, for in my Father's house there are mansions; many mansions instead of my inn, and my Saviour himself hath not disdained to be my harbinger; he is gone thither before me, and

gone to prepare a place for me, I will therefore quiet and content myself with the inconveniencies of my short journey, for my accommodations will be admirable when I come to my home, that heavenly Jerusalem, which is the place of my rest and happiness.*

On the right Employment of Time.

MY time is part of that talent, which my Maker had put into my hand, and for which he will at the great day demand an account; and if I have spent that talent in unprofitable employments, or in less profitable than I should, my arrear is so much the greater. If I have consumed my time in studying my preferment, honour, or wealth, in this world; in studying how to please myself with vain and unnecessary recreations, in unlawful or excessive pleasures; in unlawful or immoderate curiosities; which I might better have spent in the study of the mystery of Christ, or the conformity unto that will and testament he left me, or improving my interest in him, I have lost my talent of time and opportunity; for which I am accountable, as misspent.†

The consideration of our latter end is a great motive and means to put us upon the best and most profitable improvement of our time. There are certain civil and natural actions of our lives, that God Almighty hath indulged and allowed to

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* "*Of Contentation,*" *Contemplations, &c.* p. 205.
† "*Of the Knowledge of Christ crucified,*" *ibid.* p. 46.

us, and indeed commanded us with moderation to use: as the competent supplies of our own natures with moderation and sobriety; the provisions for our families, relations, and dependances, without covetuousness or anxiety; the diligent and faithful walking in our callings, and discharge thereof. But there are also other businesses of greater importance, which yet are attainable without injuring ourselves in those common concerns of our lives: namely, our knowledge of God, of his will, and of the doctrine of our redemption by Christ; our repentance of sins past; making and keeping our peace with God; acquainting ourselves with him; living to his glory; walking as in his presence; praying to him; learning to depend upon him; rejoicing in him; walking thankful unto him. These, and such like as these, are the great business and end of our lives, for which we enjoy them in this world; and these fit and prepare us for that which is to come. And the consideration that our lives are short and uncertain, and that death will sooner or later come, puts us upon this resolution and practice to do this our great work while it is called to-day; that we loiter not away our day, and neglect our task and work, while we have time and opportunity, lest the night overtake us when we cannot work; to gain oil in our lamps before the door be shut. And if men would wisely consider their latter end, they might do this great business, this one thing necessary, with ease and quietness; yea, and without any neglect of what is necessary to be done in order to the common necessities of our lives and callings. It is not these that disable us and rob us of our time: but the thieves that rob us of our time, and our one thing necessary, are

negligence, excess of pleasures, immoderate cares for wealth, honour, and grandeur; excessive eating and drinking, curiosity, idleness: and then when sickness comes, and death comes, and God Almighty calls upon us to give up the account of our stewardship, we are all in confusion, our business is not half done, it may be not begun; and yet our lamp is out; our day is spent; night hath overtaken us; and what we do is with much trouble, perplexity, and vexation; and possibly our soul takes its flight before we can finish it.*

Most certainly the wise consideration of our latter end, and the employing of ourselves, on that account upon that one thing necessary, renders the life [so spent] the most contenting and comfortable life in the world. For as a man, that is afore-hand in the world, hath a much more quiet life in order to externals, than he that is behind-hand; so a man that hath made his peace with his Maker through Christ Jesus, hath done a great part of the chief business of his life, and is ready upon all occasions, for all conditions, whereunto the Divine Providence shall assign him, whether of life or death, or health or sickness, or poverty or riches; he is as it were afore-hand in the business and concern of his everlasting, and of his present state also. If God lend him longer life in this world, he carries on his great business to greater degrees of perfection, with ease, and without difficulty, trouble, or perturbation. But if Almighty God cut him shorter, and call him to give an account of his stewardship, he is ready, and his accounts are fair, and his business is not now to be gone about.

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* "*Of the Consideration of our latter End,*" *ibid.* p. 4.

Blessed is that servant whom his master when he comes shall find so doing.*

Although death be thus subdued, and rendered rather a benefit than a terror to good men; yet, death is not to be wished or desired; though it be an object not to be feared, it is a thing not to be coveted; for certainly life is the greatest temporal blessing in this world. It was the passion, not the virtue, of that excellent prophet Elijah, that desired to die, because he thought himself only left of the true worshippers of God, 1 *Kings*, xix. 4. 10. We are all placed in this world by Almighty God, and a talent of life is delivered to us, and we are commanded to improve it; a task is set every one of us in this life by the Great Master of the Family of Heaven and Earth, and we are required with patience, and obedience, and faithfulness, to perform our task, and not to be weary of our work, nor wish our day at an end before its time. When our Lord calls us, it is our duty with courage and cheerfulness to obey his call: but until he calls, it is our duty, with patience, and contentedness, to perform our task, to be doing of our work: to improve our knowledge and faith, and [to do] those works of piety and goodness that he requires; to serve our generation; to give an example of virtue and goodness; to encourage others in the ways of virtue and goodness; to provide for our families and relations; to do all good offices of justice, righteousness, liberality, charity to others; cheerfully and industriously to follow our callings and employments; and other natural, civil, and moral employments, which though of a lower importance in respect of ourselves, yet are of

* *Ibid.* p. 5.

greater use and moment in respect of others; and are as well as the former required of us, and part of the task that our great Lord requires of us, and for the sake of which he also bestows many talents upon us to be thus improved in this life, and for which we must also at the end of our day give our Lord an account; and therefore for the sake of this also we are to be thankful for our life, and not be desirous to leave our post, our station, our business, our life, till our Lord calls us to himself in the ordinary way of his providence: for he is the only Lord of our lives, and we are not the Lords of our own lives.*

A second caution is this: that as the business and employments and concerns of our life must not estrange us from the thoughts of death, so again we must be careful, that the over-much thought of death do not so much possess our thoughts as to make us forget the concerns of our life, nor neglect the business which that portion of time is allowed us for: As the business of fitting our souls for heaven; the businesses of our callings, relations, places, stations: nay, the comfortable, thankful, sober enjoyments of those honest, lawful comforts of our life that God lends us; so as it be done with great sobriety, moderation, as in the presence of God, and with much thankfulness to him; for this is part of that very duty we owe to God for those very external comforts and blessings we enjoy. *Deut.* xxviii. 47. A wise and due consideration of our latter end is neither to render us a sad, melancholy, disconsolate people; nor to render us unfit for the businesses and offices of our life; but to render us more watchful, vigilant, indus-

* *Ibid.* p. 8—10.

trious, soberly cheerful and thankful to that God, that hath been pleased thus to make our lives serviceable to Him, comfortable to us, profitable to others, and after all this to take away the bitterness and sting of death through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Whatever you do, [says the author in another place,] be very careful to retain in your heart a habit of religion, that may be always about you, and keep your heart and your life always as in the presence of God, and tending towards him. This will be continually with you, and put itself into acts, even although you are not in a solemn posture of religious worship, and will lend you multitudes of religious applications to Almighty God, upon all occasions and interventions, which will not at all hinder you in any measure in your secular occasions, but better and further you: and will give a tincture of religion and devotion upon all your secular employments, and turn those very actions, which are civil or natural, into the very true nature of religion, and make your whole life to be an uninterrmitted life of religion and duty to God. For this habit of piety in your soul, will not only not lie sleeping and inactive, but almost in every hour of the day will put forth actual exertings of itself in applications of short occasional prayers, thanksgivings, dependence, resort unto that God that is always near you, and lodgeth in a manner in your heart by his fear and love, and habitual religion towards him. And by this means you do effectually, and in the best and readiest manner imaginable doubly redeem your time. 1. In the lawful exercise of those

* *Ibid.* p. 10.

natural and civil concerns, which are not only permitted, but in a great measure enjoined by Almighty God. 2. At the same time exercising acts of religious duties, observance, and veneration unto Almighty God, by perpetuated, or at least frequently reiterated, though short, acts of devotion to him. And this is the great art of Christian chemistry, to convert those acts that are natural or civil, into acts truly religious; whereby the whole course of this life is both truly and interpretatively a service to Almighty God, and an uninterupted state of religion: which is the best, and noblest, and most universal redemption of time.*

Be very careful to prefer those actions of your life that most concern you; be sure to do them chiefest, to do them most. Let those things that are of less moment, give place to those things that are of greatest moment. Every man of the most ordinary prudence, having many things to do, will be sure to be doing that first and chiefest which most concerns him, and which being omitted, and possibly wholly disappointed, might occasion his most irreparable loss. We have, it is true, many things to be done in this life, *Ars longa, vita brevis*†; and we have seasons and opportunities for them; but of these many things, some are barely conveniences for this life; some, though they seem more necessary, yet still they rise no higher, nor look further, nor serve longer, but only for the meridian of this life, and are of no possible use in the next moment after death. The pleasures, the profits, the honours, the most florid accomodations of great human learning, stately houses and palaces, goodly pos-

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* "*Of the Redemption of Time*," *Contemplations*, &c. p. 259.
† *Literally*, Art is long, life short.

sessions, the greatest honours, highest reputation, deepest policy, they are fitted only to this life; when death comes, they are insignificant pitiful things, and serve for nothing at all the very next moment after death; nay, the diseases, and pains, and languishings that are the preludes of death, render them perfectly vain, if not vexatious and torturing. But there are certain businesses that are not only excellently useful in this life, but such as abide by us in sickness, in death; nay, go along with us with singular comfort into the next life, and never leave us, but state us in eternal rest and happiness, such as may be with much ease acquired in the times of health and life, but very difficult to be attained in the time of sickness, and the hour of death, but never to be forgotten after death, such as are of that necessity, that in comparison of them, all other things are impertinent and vain, if not desperately noxious and hurtful. There is no necessity for me to be rich, and great in the world; to have such a title of honour, such a place of dignity, or profit; to leave such an inheritance or titular dignity to my son; or to have so many thousand pounds in my inventory, when I die. But there are certain matters of absolute necessity to me, such as if I am without, I am undone and lost, and yet such as if not attained here in this life, can never be attained; and therefore, as it concerns me in the highest degree to attain them, so it concerns me in the highest degree to attain them in this life, and to take all opportunities imaginable in order thereunto, and to redeem every minute of time for that purpose, lest I should be for ever disappointed; and not to be like the foolish virgin, getting oil when

the door is ready to be shut; but be fitted and ready to die, and give up my account to my Lord with peace and cheerfulness, and comfort; so that if I should, either by the hand of some disease or casualty, or other providence, receive this solemn message, 'Set thy house in order, for thou shalt die,' I might receive it with as much readiness, willingness, and cheerfulness, as a faithful and diligent servant would receive this command from his master: 'You must take such a journey for me to-morrow.' Sickness and pain, and wearisome and froward old age have business enough of themselves to entertain us; and any man that hath had experience of either, will find he hath enough to do to bear them, or to struggle with them. And further, we know not whether the grace and opportunity that God hath lent us, and we have neglected in our lives, shall ever be afforded again to us in the times of our sicknesses, or upon our death-beds; but a little portion of time in our lives and healths are furnished with thousands of invitations and golden opportunities for these great works. Let us therefore redeem those portions of time that our life and health lend us, for this great and one thing necessary: and let us remember, that when we shall come to die, and our souls sit as it were hovering upon our lips, ready to take their flight, at how great a rate we would then be willing to purchase some of those hours we once trifled away!*

Upon the management and disposal of our time depends the everlasting concernment of our souls. *Ex hoc momento pendet Æternitas*†. Time

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* *Ibid.* p. 261—264. 267.

† On this small portion of time eternity depends.

once lost, is lost for ever. It is never to be recovered; all the wealth of both the Indies will not redeem nor recall the last hour I spent; it ceaseth for ever.*

In addition to the passages on the 'Guidance of the Spirit of truth,' cited at p. 13 and 14, the Editors subjoin the following, taken from a separate Treatise of the same Author.

THE Spirit of God sanctifies the heart by its own immediate and continued assistance. It contests with thy daily temptations that are from without, and conquers them; and with thy hourly corruptions that are within thee, and wastes and subdues them. In the midst of thy difficulties it will be thy counsellor, a secret voice behind thee, saying, 'This is the way, walk in it.' In the midst of thy temptations it will be thy strength, and a Grace sufficient for thee. In the midst of thy troubles it will be thy light and thy comfort. Only beware thou neglect not the voice of this Spirit of God: it may be, thy neglect may quench it, and thou mayest never hear that voice more. When the still voice is not heard by a man, his soul draweth near to the grave, and his life to the destroyers.

The observation of the secret admonition of the Spirit of God in the heart, as it is an effectual means, so it is a calm and comfortable means to cleanse and sanctify thy heart; and the more it is attended unto, the more it will be conversant with thy soul for thy instruction, strength, and

* *Ibid.* p. 266.

comfort. "When thou goest, it shall lead thee, when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee, and when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee.*"

* "A Discourse of the Knowledge of God and ourselves," 8vo. 1688, p. 390—392.

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